

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

+ + + + +

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

+ + + + +

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 13, 2010

+ + + + +

The Public Hearing of the District of Columbia State Board of Education convened at 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001, at 6:00 p.m., Ted Trabue, Vice-President, presiding.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

TED TRABUE, Vice-President
DOROTHY DOUGLAS, Member
MARK JONES, Member
WILLIAM LOCKRIDGE, Member
DOTTI LOVE WADE, Member
MARY LORD, Member
LAURA SLOVER, Member
SEKOU BIDDLE, Member

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
EDUCATION:

KERRI BRIGGS, State Superintendent
BEVERLY WHEELER, Executive Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

KEVIN A. JACKSON, JR.

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(6:05 p.m.)

VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Good evening. Please allow me to call this meeting to order.

On behalf of the members of the District of Columbia State Board of Education, I want to welcome you, our guests, and the viewing public, and my colleagues, to our Wednesday, January 13, 2010, State Board of Education public hearing.

The State Board of Education holds its regular meetings on the third Wednesday of every month, but we are holding a special meeting tonight for the purpose of holding a hearing on English language proficiency standards.

We believe that community input on all issues affecting education is critical if we are to improve educational outcomes here in the District of Columbia. The members of the State Board of Education and our State

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1 Superintendent, Dr. Kerri Briggs, welcome your
2 participation and your support in our efforts
3 to improve educational outcomes here in the
4 District of Columbia.

5 I would like to acknowledge the
6 presence of several of my colleagues. From
7 Ward 1, we have Dotti Love Wade; Ward 2, we
8 have Mary Lord; Laura Slover from Ward 3 is on
9 the way; Sekou Biddle from Ward 4 is here; and
10 Mark Jones from Ward 5.

11 Our President, Lisa Raymond,
12 unfortunately is on travel tonight and could
13 not be here with us.

14 And Kevin Jackson, of course, our
15 student representative, is here with us as
16 well. And he has been here throughout his
17 tenure as a student board member, and we
18 sincerely appreciate his presence.

19 We will now go to the second item
20 on our agenda, third item actually, which is
21 comments from our Office of the State
22 Superintendent, Dr. Kerri Briggs.

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1 SUPERINTENDENT BRIGGS: Thank you,
2 Mr. Trabue.

3 So just some quick opening remarks
4 about the work we're doing here tonight. The
5 Elementary and Secondary Education Act
6 requires that each state develop English
7 language proficiency standards in the domains
8 of listening, speaking, reading, and writing,
9 that are aligned with the state's academic
10 content standards.

11 In order to meet these
12 requirements, and serve all students, the
13 District of Columbia joined the World-Class
14 Instructional Design and Assessment
15 consortium, commonly referred to as WIDA, in
16 2003.

17 Per the Public Education Reform
18 Amendment Act of 2007, the State Board of
19 Education has approval authority over state
20 academic standards. These English language
21 proficiency standards are the last of the
22 initial standards being approved by the State

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1 Board.

2 Last month you received a formal
3 presentation from Assistant Superintendent of
4 Elementary and Secondary Education, Cathie
5 Carothers, along with Bethany Nickerson, our
6 State Director for English Language Learners.

7 You also heard from Dr. Tim Boals,
8 who is Executive Director of the WIDA
9 consortia, who presented an overview of the
10 standards and the services that the District
11 receives as being a part of the consortium.

12 Tonight will serve as our
13 opportunity to hear from the public on these
14 standards, and, we hope, for your final vote
15 from the State Board during your regularly
16 scheduled meeting in February.

17 The WIDA consortia is a non-profit
18 cooperative comprised of the District of
19 Columbia and 21 other states working together
20 to meet the federal requirements of ESEA for
21 English language learners, with innovative
22 standards and assessments, serving

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1 approximately 840,000 students nationwide.

2 The WIDA standards correspond to
3 the second language acquisition process and
4 represent the language ELL students need to be
5 successful in academic content areas of
6 language arts, math, science, and social
7 studies. The standards measure progress of
8 students, map what children are expected to
9 know and be able to do, and also encourage the
10 teaching of advanced skills.

11 I look forward to hearing more
12 tonight from those who came to testify, and
13 thanks for your -- thanks for being here.

14 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
15 very much, Dr. Briggs.

16 We have nine witnesses who have
17 called in and who are scheduled to testify
18 this evening. And what we will do is bring
19 the witnesses up in panels of three. Each
20 witness will be given three minutes to make
21 their presentation, and then, after that,
22 there will be a question and answer session

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1 from members of the State Board.

2 There is a clock over there. When
3 you are seated at the table, the clock is over
4 to your left, so please be mindful of your
5 time. And at this point, we will call the
6 first panel, which consists of Deborah Maatta
7 from the Office of Bilingual Education,
8 Veronica Rivera, Mexican American Legal
9 Defense Education Fund, and Jennifer King from
10 the Cesar Chavez Public Charter School for
11 Public Policy.

12 And pardon me if I mispronounced
13 any of your names. Please identify yourself
14 for the record.

15 MS. MAATTA: I am Deborah Maatta.

16 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Maatta.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. RIVERA: Veronica Rivera.

19 MS. KING: Jennifer King.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
21 very much. Ms. Maatta, you may begin.

22 MS. MAATTA: Okay. Thank you.

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1 Good evening. My name is Deborah
2 Maatta, and I am an ESL teacher and teacher
3 trainer with D.C. Public Schools. I have been
4 using the WIDA standards since I began working
5 as an ESL teacher in 2004. I also worked as
6 an ESL teacher from 1996 to 1999 when DCPS did
7 not have English language proficiency
8 standards in place.

9 When I taught content-based ESL in
10 the late 1990s, I based my lessons on the DCPS
11 content standards and designed language
12 activities to support that content
13 acquisition. But I must confess, my approach
14 to language development activities was at
15 times very random, as we did not have a set of
16 standards to guide us or a set curriculum.

17 When I returned to ESL teaching in
18 2004, I found the WIDA standards to be an
19 extremely important tool, which clearly
20 outlined the language skills in reading,
21 writing, listening, and speaking, that ESL
22 teachers should address.

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1 In addition, teachers have much
2 better information about the language
3 abilities of our students because of the data
4 provided from the ACCESS for ELLs Exam,
5 provided information about proficiency in
6 listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as
7 well as acquisition of content area language.

8 I feel I am a more effective ESL
9 teacher now, since I know where my students
10 are in terms of language proficiency in each
11 domain, and I have a very clear guide as to
12 how students must progress to become English
13 proficient.

14 Without the standards, English as
15 a second language teaching would return to the
16 way it was in the 1990s, based on individual
17 teachers' views of language development and
18 progress, rather than on a fully researched
19 and highly refined document such as the WIDA
20 English language proficiency standards.

21 In addition, I find the WIDA
22 standards to be extremely important for DCPS

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1 teachers as we implement the DCPS teaching and
2 learning framework. I think the District and
3 DCPS teachers are now more focused than ever
4 on working towards attainment of the content
5 area standards. The WIDA standards are
6 written in a way that teachers can align the
7 language proficiency standards with the
8 content standards. And that way all teachers
9 are ultimately working toward the same goals.

10 The general education teachers
11 focus on the content standards. ESL teachers
12 focus on the language of the DCPS content
13 standards, thus providing an important
14 integration of English language development
15 and content area acquisition.

16 While students focus on acquiring
17 English in an English as a second language
18 class, the language development activities
19 will also support the acquisition of content
20 area knowledge, because the WIDA standards can
21 be aligned to the DCPS content standards.

22 As a trainer, I teach courses in

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1 strategies for working with English language
2 learners. Just last week I introduced the
3 standards to a group of teachers, mainly from
4 Brightwood Elementary School. Please listen
5 to some of the comments I received from the
6 teachers I am working with.

7 "I found the WIDA proficiency
8 standards to be very helpful and clear. As a
9 teacher, you aim to reach all students, and
10 just knowing how ELLs are actually assessed
11 helps me to know how to approach students at
12 their levels and how to check for growth."

13 Another teacher said, "The WIDA
14 information now is more comprehensible, since
15 it is broken down in more specific objectives
16 that can help to guide instruction, as well as
17 giving the classroom teacher a tool to
18 understand the language levels better. I
19 thought it was very important to see the
20 speaking component, since the regular
21 standards are so broad."

22 Another teacher said, "I have also

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1 never seen language standards before, so these
2 will definitely help my everyday planning, as
3 well as in developing IEP goals based on their
4 second language levels. I hope to have more
5 appropriate goals and objectives that are
6 realistic for my population."

7 And another teacher said --

8 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I have to
9 ask you to wrap up.

10 MS. MAATTA: Okay.

11 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: You're
12 about a minute over.

13 MS. MAATTA: As you can see, the
14 WIDA standards are very useful for every
15 teacher working with ELLs -- general ed
16 teachers, special ed teachers, and English as
17 a second language teachers. To me, the most
18 important things the standards provide is a
19 guide for developing language proficiency that
20 allows teachers to integrate the DCPS
21 standards so that all instruction for ELLs is
22 presented in a cohesive, meaningful way.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
2 very much.

3 Ms. Rivera?

4 MS. RIVERA: Good evening, members
5 of the Board. On behalf of the Mexican
6 American Legal Defense and Educational Fund,
7 MALDEF, we commend the District of Columbia
8 State Board of Education for pursuing the
9 adoption of English language proficiency
10 standards.

11 My testimony today will focus upon
12 the importance of having standards for English
13 language learners, ELLs, and recommendations
14 pertaining to the standards the Board is
15 considering adopting. MALDEF is particularly
16 concerned with the academic outcomes of the
17 nation's 5.5 million ELL students, because
18 nearly 80 percent of K through 12 ELLs are
19 Spanish-speaking Latinos.

20 ELLs constitute the fastest-
21 growing subgroup of students in the U.S.
22 public schools, with an annual increase of

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1 about 10 percent, and a 72 percent overall
2 increase between 1992 and 2002. Experts
3 predict that one-quarter of the nation's K
4 through 12 student population will be made up
5 of ELLs by 2025.

6 ELLs must be subject to high
7 educational expectations and high academic
8 achievement standards. Therefore, with regard
9 to the standards the State Board is
10 considering adopting, we support the goal of
11 ensuring that ELLs meet language proficiency
12 goals in all four language domains --
13 speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

14 We also believe that students
15 should be assessed annually in the areas of
16 reading and writing, given that these areas
17 lay the academic groundwork for students in
18 other subject areas. In addition, we support
19 an assessment that requires ELL students to
20 have transitioned into classrooms not tailored
21 to limited English proficient children and
22 have a sufficient level of English proficiency

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1 to permit them to succeed.

2 For assessment-based
3 accountability systems to be effective, the
4 assessments used for ELL students must be
5 valid and reliable for the student population.

6 Therefore, we recommend that the Board
7 consider adopting native language content
8 assessments in the top five languages spoken
9 in the District of Columbia schools as part of
10 the standards.

11 Native language content
12 assessments are generally more likely than
13 other assessment instruments to generate
14 meaningful academic achievement data for the
15 ELL student population. Research clearly
16 shows that native language instruction and
17 linguistic accommodations are necessary to
18 ensure academic success for ELL students as
19 they transition to English language academic
20 instruction.

21 We urge the Board to develop or
22 make available to ELL students native language

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1 or dual language assessments that are valid,
2 reliable, and aligned to grade level content
3 and student academic achievement standards,
4 and assess such students using such
5 assessments, if such assessments validly and
6 reliably measure the content and instructions
7 such students received.

8 With limited opportunities to
9 learn English, ELL students face particularly
10 poor outcomes, failing graduation tests, and
11 dropping out of high schools at far higher
12 rates than classmates who are fluent in
13 English. It is critical that we improve
14 instruction for these students to help them
15 learn English, not penalize them for poor
16 quality of instruction that denies them the
17 opportunity to learn the language well.

18 Therefore, we recommend that the
19 Board invest professional development of its
20 teachers and school officials who work
21 directly with ELLs, including professional
22 development for content area teachers.

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1 Educational concerns of ELLs are now on the
2 forefront of debating -- debates being held by
3 school boards, state legislatures, and
4 Congress.

5 And although we haven't yet
6 reached a place where ELLs are performing on
7 levels equal to their peers, we have changed
8 the debate and generated public will to
9 address the needs of ELLs.

10 We, again, commend the Board for
11 moving forward and adopting English language
12 proficiency standards, and we stand ready to
13 work with you to implement, evaluate, and
14 improve the standards once adopted.

15 Thank you.

16 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
17 Ms. Rivera.

18 MS. RIVERA: Oh. And if I just
19 may add, I do have written testimony that has
20 a whole lot more information.

21 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: We would
22 sincerely appreciate that. If you could pass

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1 it to the young lady over on your left, she
2 will collect it and make sure that we all
3 receive a copy of it. Thank you.

4 Ms. King?

5 MS. KING: Good evening, members
6 of the Board. I am Jennifer King, the ELL
7 Coordinator and educator at Cesar Chavez
8 Public Charter School for Public Policy,
9 Parkside Campus.

10 The WIDA English language
11 proficiency standards are instrumental in
12 paving the way to higher learning for our
13 English language learners. They are designed
14 in a format that promotes a future-oriented
15 pedagogy, meaning that it is one that looks at
16 the immediate potential of our English
17 language learners, yet lends itself to setting
18 higher goals for both language and content
19 development.

20 The WIDA English language
21 proficiency standards are set up in such a way
22 that embraces this philosophy of a future-

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oriented pedagogy. Designed for learning to be amplified rather than simplified, ELL support staff builds a partnership with core educators to help our English language learners achieve the general education standards and beyond. Educators can maintain high standards while adding the language function and support to the curriculum objectives necessary for academic achievement.

I will present you with one example. For a grade level cluster 9 through 12, a Level 3 ELL with a Level 4 goal in the speaking domain, the model performance indicator states, "Discuss, with examples, character development using visuals or graphic organizers transformed using a curriculum objective. Discuss, with examples, human trafficking using visuals and notes from various sources."

Members of the Board, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the WIDA English language proficiency

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1 standards -- standards that help educators
2 amplify, not simplify.

3 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
4 very, very much. Before we move on to the
5 round of questioning, I also want to
6 acknowledge that we have been joined by our
7 member from Ward 7, Dorothy Douglas.

8 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Thank you.

9 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Good
10 evening, Ms. Douglas.

11 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Good evening.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Let me
13 start the round of questioning. We will give
14 each one of the members three minutes for that
15 -- that means three minutes for the question
16 and the response in totality.

17 I want to thank all of you very
18 much for some very, very interesting
19 testimony. And I will have Dotti Love Wade
20 with the first round of questioning. Thanks.

21 MEMBER WADE: Good evening. Thank
22 you so very much for coming down and sharing

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1 with us.

2 My concern is whether or not your
3 ELL classes are inclusionary, or are they
4 pull-out for the students? And what I mean by
5 -- I think you know what I mean by "pull-out."

6 For those who may not, some ELL classes are
7 taught in the classroom general, and other ELL
8 classes are taught with the children being
9 pulled out of the general class and going into
10 a special class for ELL education. And I also
11 would like to know if you have a preference
12 and why.

13 MS. RIVERA: We are closely
14 following that. And, again, this is Veronica
15 Rivera with MALDEF. And we definitely support
16 integration and not segregation, and that is
17 what happens sometimes with our students.
18 Again, in my written testimony I provide
19 additional information.

20 What we are finding is that
21 students in ELL programs are actually more
22 likely to be segregated than integrated, and

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1 so that is something that you on the Board,
2 and D.C. as a whole, needs to make sure that
3 does not take place.

4 There are times where you will
5 need to, as you call it, pull them out, but
6 they should still be able to circulate to the
7 different classes and be provided instruction.

8 And the preference, again, is to integrate
9 rather than segregate.

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

11 MS. MAATTA: Hello. I'm Deborah
12 Maatta with D.C. Public Schools. D.C. Public
13 Schools uses both models. It depends on the
14 resources available at individual schools.
15 And often, or usually, that choice is the
16 principal's decision. Many DCPS schools use
17 the inclusion model. It is especially
18 effective when there can be one ESL teacher
19 teamed with one or two gen ed teachers, to
20 provide that support throughout the school day
21 for the ELLs in those classes.

22 Sometimes it is not possible to

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1 use that model, just because there aren't
2 enough ESL teachers. And there may be 20
3 students spread out among -- you know, with 15
4 different teachers, so you wouldn't really be
5 able to use an inclusion model with 15
6 teachers to coordinate with.

7 So it often does depend on the
8 resources at the school level, whether the
9 pull-out model is chosen or the inclusion
10 model. But we definitely fully support the
11 inclusion model and support schools in using
12 that model here with D.C. Public Schools.

13 MS. KING: Hi. I'm Jennifer King,
14 Cesar Chavez Public Charter School. We do
15 have a content-based ESL program where we work
16 with our ELLs through the content areas. It
17 is an inclusion model. However, there are
18 times where you want to give them the extra
19 support to read, to write. You want to give
20 them that extra time where they can -- you can
21 really work on their skills. And so there are
22 times where we will pull out in small group,

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1 so that when we go back to the larger group
2 they feel more confident.

3 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
4 very much.

5 MEMBER WADE: Can I ask --

6 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: On the
7 second round, sure.

8 MEMBER WADE: Okay. Thank you.
9 Thank you so much.

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Ms. Lord?

11 MEMBER LORD: Thank you. Thank
12 you for this very impressive testimony.

13 I would like to actually start
14 with you, Ms. King. You have brought a show-
15 and-tell, and you mentioned that it was for
16 the 9th through 12th grade --

17 MS. KING: Yes.

18 MEMBER LORD: -- group, which I
19 think traditionally has been among the hardest
20 of students to reach. If you are young, you
21 seem to pick up languages a lot earlier, and I
22 wonder if you could just sort of go through

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1 sort of what the WIDA structure or the
2 structures that you use encompass.

3 And then, if we have time, I would
4 like to return to the whole panel and talk
5 about sort of what we would see in a classroom
6 that would look different. I mean, how does
7 content and English language learning marry
8 each other in the new structures? Thanks.

9 MS. KING: With the WIDA program,
10 you start off with Level 1, and Level 5 is our
11 English proficient level. It is set up so
12 teachers can use the curriculum, the DCPS
13 curriculum, but they can match the language
14 function needed for the certain level that the
15 child is, and the supports, so whatever
16 curriculum piece I am teaching, or the content
17 area a teacher is teaching, I will partner up
18 with that teacher to decide what supports, how
19 do we get them there, how can we achieve that.

20 So, again, with the future-
21 oriented pedagogy, we can't look at our high
22 school students where they are today. We have

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1 to look at their immediate potential and know
2 where they can go.

3 MEMBER LORD: How would that work,
4 for example, with your example on human
5 trafficking as a content area?

6 MS. KING: This was an English
7 class project. It was a three-page written-
8 out take-home assignment. And so what I did
9 is I scaffolded that project, and what the
10 support was was taking all of the questions,
11 putting them on index cards, sitting down at
12 the computers with them, so that they could
13 complete this research project, and they could
14 attain the same level as their mainstream
15 peers.

16 MEMBER LORD: So, in other words,
17 the questions might have been at a simpler
18 English language level, although the content
19 is sort of equivalent to what the regular
20 classroom kids were getting?

21 MS. KING: Actually, I didn't
22 change the questions. I just cut them out and

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1 put them on index cards. So we were not
2 looking at wordy documents, so it was actually
3 the same document, but it was just broken down
4 into a smaller package. It was more through
5 the presentation of the project.

6 MEMBER LORD: And to the whole
7 panel, I think many of us still think of
8 English language learning as the -- you know,
9 you're in a separate class, you're learning
10 the English first and not the content, how
11 does it -- how would today's classroom or
12 techniques look different?

13 MS. MAATTA: I think it's going to
14 -- I'm going to relate to what Jennifer had
15 said. We try to use that same technique where
16 there is -- the whole class might be studying
17 a story. If that study is written at a level
18 that our ESL students may not be able to
19 understand it, the teacher may rewrite the
20 story and, as you had said, using simpler
21 language where the storyline is still the
22 same.

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1 So that while the general ed
2 students may be reading the regular text, the
3 lowest level -- and we wouldn't use the same
4 story for all ESL students. We would take the
5 take the Level 1s and perhaps Level 2s. They
6 may read the easier story, or they may use a
7 graphic organizer that was based on that
8 story, so that they can get that same content
9 but with much less language that they have to
10 decode and understand.

11 Your higher level ELLs would still
12 read the same story, but with support from the
13 teacher, maybe with more vocabulary introduced
14 first, maybe a graphic organizer to help. So
15 you are trying to have everyone studying the
16 same thing, but different students having
17 different supports.

18 And then, the same thing -- we
19 also use the WIDA standards to help us to know
20 where -- what our children are going to
21 produce. If you are expecting, you know, in a
22 -- I don't know, a third grade class, a fully

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1 formed paragraph, but you have a student who
2 just arrived in the United States, hasn't
3 studied English before, that child is not
4 going to be able to compose a -- you know, a
5 paragraph with a topic sentence and three
6 supporting sentences, and the conclusion.

7 So that child may orally tell us
8 some of the information, as best he or she
9 can. Maybe we could give that child some
10 sentence frames with a word bank, and that
11 child might write two or three sentences about
12 the topic until they gain more skills. We are
13 still going to hope to get them to that five-
14 sentence paragraph later on in the school
15 year, but at the beginning we need to start
16 where the child is and build their English, so
17 that they can achieve those grade level goals.

18 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.
19 Thank you. Okay. Mr. Biddle?

20 MS. RIVERA: If I can just answer
21 very briefly. One of the innovative things
22 that we -- that we promote is extended

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1 learning time with regard especially with
2 students that are in high school, because they
3 are not going to be able to perform within the
4 regular classroom.

5 And high school students are at a
6 point where, if they get discouraged, they
7 drop out. So that is one of the innovative
8 things that we are looking at.

9 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

10 Okay. Mr. Biddle?

11 MEMBER BIDDLE: Thank you. For
12 Ms. Rivera, I have a quick question. You
13 talked during your testimony about native
14 language assessments in content areas. Is
15 that correct?

16 MS. RIVERA: Yes.

17 MEMBER BIDDLE: I would be curious
18 on your thoughts on how long or should there
19 even be a cutoff point for making available
20 these native language assessments in the
21 content areas.

22 MS. RIVERA: There should

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1 definitely be a cutoff point, because you want
2 them to become proficient, and then be able to
3 take exams in English language. But in order
4 to get there, that is why we are asking for
5 native language assessment.

6 MEMBER BIDDLE: So to follow up on
7 that, what do you envision as being the cutoff
8 point to get there? Or is it -- I mean, I
9 could see a number of ways to scaffold it.

10 MS. RIVERA: Exactly. It would
11 vary by student, and that is where you would
12 -- you would determine this by, again, the
13 standards that you adopt and determining it by
14 the level of proficiency.

15 MEMBER BIDDLE: And then, do you
16 see a scenario in which there is -- as a
17 student is approaching that cutoff threshold,
18 we may -- and I can't imagine being a student
19 who falls in this unlucky domain -- be someone
20 who essentially is being asked to take the
21 content assessment in both their native
22 language as well as in English, as they are

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1 essentially crossing that threshold to the
2 point where we want them taking it only in
3 English?

4 MS. RIVERA: There may be
5 situations --

6 MEMBER BIDDLE: Okay.

7 MS. RIVERA: -- when that would
8 happen.

9 MEMBER BIDDLE: And I would be
10 curious about, do you know of other states or
11 jurisdictions that are doing a lot of native
12 language assessment in the content areas?

13 MS. RIVERA: There are some
14 states, but I can't name them off the top
15 right now, but I will be happy to provide that
16 information to the Board.

17 MEMBER BIDDLE: Yes, I would love
18 to see that, just to get some thoughts on
19 that, because, obviously, I think that as we
20 are moving toward potentially adopting these
21 common core standards a lot of conversation
22 has circled around the notion that it will

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1 enhance states to have common assessments
2 that, you know, we know that proficient in
3 D.C. means they are proficient in -- name one
4 of your dozens of states that are on board
5 with the common core.

6 And I would imagine that common
7 core would also make it easier for us to be
8 able to get into doing native language
9 assessments in content areas, because we would
10 be assessing the same content across many more
11 jurisdictions. And one of the challenges we
12 would have in the District is we are a
13 relatively small jurisdiction. If we were
14 needing to create assessments -- specific
15 assessments in -- I believe you suggested the
16 top five spoken languages --

17 MS. RIVERA: Right.

18 MEMBER BIDDLE: -- in the
19 District, that gets us creating and buying, so
20 it does come down to, you know, a budgetary
21 issue --

22 MS. RIVERA: Sure.

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1 MEMBER BIDDLE: -- in an
2 environment where if we were eventually custom
3 ordering large -- small numbers of these
4 assessments it could be cost prohibitive. But
5 I imagine that if we list out the top five
6 spoken languages here there exists a number of
7 students across the country in various
8 jurisdictions that we would be able to get
9 engaged in giving those assessments across
10 multiple states, and, therefore, get them at a
11 reasonable cost, because we obviously want to
12 make sure we do what is in the best interest
13 of our students, and, frankly, give our
14 teachers the best tools to support them.

15 And we also have to be mindful of the
16 fact that we live in a -- and as a reminder on
17 a more daily basis in the world of government
18 these days, in a world of limited resources.

19 So thank you.

20 MS. RIVERA: Thank you.

21 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
22 Mr. Biddle.

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1 Now we have our Ward 7
2 representative, Ms. Douglas.

3 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Good evening.
4 It's an honor to be your representative for
5 Ward 7, and to have Cesar Chavez School here.
6 I'm glad to have you all sitting here, to be
7 here to represent Ward 7. And I know you all
8 are doing a wonderful job at Cesar Chavez,
9 because I have been hearing that.

10 But I did have some concerns in
11 reference not just to Cesar Chavez but other
12 schools that I have been visiting and
13 observing. I notice that a lot of young kids
14 -- I say young kids, third grade and younger
15 kids, like the kindergarten on up, they
16 received a lot of worksheets.

17 And that concerns me, because --
18 and on those worksheets the instructions are
19 not very clearly -- clear to the parents or to
20 the learner that is trying to learn. And I
21 find math or English, which are so important,
22 and also observing in the high schools that

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1 that's the same issue, too. So I think there
2 needs to be more hands-on involvement with the
3 teachers. And I know staff has been kind of
4 short, too, during the year.

5 But can you give me some feedback?

6 What are some of the things that you are
7 doing to kind of like -- in other words, doing
8 the teaching themselves, and they do have
9 difficulties in not learning, because there
10 are some students that I have known that have
11 problems grasping English. And what are some
12 of the other resources and things that you are
13 using to help those kids excel that are doing
14 very low in that area?

15 MS. KING: I will take that
16 question. Again, I am Jennifer King. At
17 Cesar Chavez, our ELL program has an after-
18 school component to it. So for both our
19 middle school and our high school we are there
20 from 4:00 to 5:00 with our English language
21 learners working on homework assignments.

22 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Okay. Also, are

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1 there any other projects that you are doing
2 that the kids can go off, do themselves, and
3 set up in a corner, like a little resource
4 that they can -- when they are having
5 difficulties? Because some kids are kind of
6 like, when others are doing well, and they
7 just take a little bit more time than others.

8 So what are the processes that
9 you're using to help those that need that
10 little extra time to get that -- to grasp that
11 English lesson plan that you have planned?

12 MS. KING: While I work in the
13 classroom, I also have a center set up with
14 computers. I have an ELL library. I have a
15 recorded library. I have adapted text
16 materials from 6th through 12th grade that all
17 English language learners can use, so we can
18 move ahead and advance more quickly in the
19 content.

20 MEMBER DOUGLAS: My time is up,
21 but thank you. And also, I'm sure you are
22 using the public libraries. That is

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1 important, too. Thank you.

2 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

3 Did we have any other members on the first
4 round before I go to the second round? Okay.

5 Ms. Wade?

6 MEMBER WADE: Yes. My question
7 again is general, and it has to do with the
8 inclusionary and the -- I don't like the word
9 "segregation," but I guess you could say that,
10 the "pull-outs" I would rather use.

11 We know that in many of the
12 African-American households non-standard
13 English and ebonics is the primary language.
14 So my concern becomes, how are these children
15 being helped? And would the WIDA method of
16 instruction, in your opinion, benefit those
17 children who may as well be speaking a Third
18 World language for all intents and purposes as
19 far as career and education goes, who can't
20 write a decent sentence, because you are
21 speaking what you hear and know.

22 So when you talk about the

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1 reading, writing, listening, and speaking, do
2 you find that the children who are in the
3 inclusionary classrooms, who get the ELL in
4 inclusionary classrooms, if it spills over
5 into the general population, and, therefore,
6 benefitting all of the children?

7 And if that is the case, what
8 would be the argument for -- other than for a
9 small amount of the children -- the pull-out
10 method? I'm really -- I really have a great
11 passion for that, and I feel a lot of our
12 children are being left behind, because they
13 are not reinforced in the language.

14 MS. MAATTA: I can speak to that.

15 In a lot of the training I do on methods for
16 working with ELLs, when I work with general
17 educators one of the first things they'll say
18 is that these methods are great for all my
19 struggling students, not just the English
20 language learners. So I could see the WIDA
21 standards, especially, you know, in domains of
22 speaking and writing those productive domains,

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1 could be very useful for students that use
2 ebonics at home.

3 I also think there could be some
4 training for teachers in teaching all students
5 about language, and that you may code-switch,
6 you may speak a different way at home and
7 that's fine, that's what you speak at home.
8 But when you're in a formal setting, now we
9 are going to use our school English and not --
10 just let them understanding that they are
11 code-switching, and there are two different
12 ways that we speak. And you speak certain
13 ways in different settings, and we all change
14 our register and the words we use depending on
15 the people that we are with.

16 And I think that would be
17 something that we could teach all teachers to
18 share with their students. Students are aware
19 and are cognitive of the two types of
20 languages that they are speaking, and those
21 same methods that we use for ESL can carry
22 over and help students.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
2 very much.

3 Ms. Rivera, just one quick
4 question before you leave, and this one is
5 more for our general viewing public. Some of
6 the members of the viewing public might not be
7 as familiar with the subject as you as subject
8 matter experts are.

9 When you talked about native
10 language assessments and the five languages
11 that are primarily seen here in the District
12 of Columbia, could you name those five
13 languages, or the ones that you see as being
14 the most common?

15 MS. RIVERA: I went by the
16 presentation that you received in your
17 December meeting, and I do not have the notes
18 in front of me. I know that Spanish was one
19 of the languages.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Of course,
21 yes.

22 MS. RIVERA: And I believe it was

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1 Vietnamese, and you have the --

2 MS. MAATTA: I have them.

3 MS. RIVERA: Okay.

4 MS. MAATTA: Yes. They're
5 Spanish, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, and
6 Amharic.

7 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Okay. And
8 so it is your suggestion that we do the
9 assessments in all five of those languages.

10 MS. RIVERA: Correct. As I -- we
11 were speaking earlier about the native
12 language assessment, we understand that you
13 have -- there has to be some cost
14 effectiveness there. We understand that it is
15 cost prohibitive from -- again, from the
16 information that I received and looked at from
17 the last presentation that was done to the
18 Board, I believe there is 130 languages spoken
19 in your D.C. schools.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Right.

21 MS. RIVERA: So what we are
22 looking at is just to capture your primary

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1 languages, the top five.

2 MS. MAATTA: Can I also add? As
3 you are speaking about assessment, I would
4 also urge the Board to investigate the ONPAR
5 test that is being developed by the Center for
6 Applied Linguistics. And it is a test that is
7 designed for ESL students that requires very
8 little English knowledge to complete the test.

9 They are working on it currently
10 in science and in math, and it is at benchmark
11 level, so it wouldn't be available for every
12 grade. But it could be a test that all ESL
13 students could use, and it is -- they are able
14 to use it. It doesn't matter what language
15 they speak or their proficiency in their home
16 language.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Okay.
18 Thank you very much.

19 If there are no more questions
20 from the members of the State Board, I want to
21 thank our first panel for being here tonight.

22 Thank you for your testimony, and you are

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1 excused.

2 Let me call the second panel to
3 the table -- Michael Sindram, who was here
4 with us last week, Bonnie Moisan, and Hiam
5 Muhawi of the Stoddart Elementary School.

6 And, again, if you would identify
7 yourselves for the record, and the time clock
8 is over to your left. We'll begin, actually,
9 with Mr. Sindram.

10 MR. SINDRAM: Good evening, Chair
11 Trabue. You are moving up in the world, as
12 usual.

13 Board members, Michael Sindram.
14 And as you have indicated, Mr. Chair, I was
15 here at the last meeting regarding the student
16 conduct code, specifically University of the
17 District of Columbia. I hope this honorable
18 Board hasn't forgotten, because I haven't
19 gotten an update either from it or certainly
20 not from UDC, and we know full well justice
21 delayed is just ice denied. Sad but true.

22 I would like to begin by saying,

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1 and not in a pejorative sense, but those fresh
2 off the banana boat have a very difficult time
3 with the English language, and certainly the
4 English culture. And I took Spanish at the
5 university level and wrangled with it.

6 The problem is that in the
7 classroom setting was a limited time dealt
8 with the language other than tapes and a
9 textbook. Unless and until you speak that
10 second language at home and elsewhere, in
11 other words on a regular basis, it really
12 dies. And here and now, as I speak,
13 obviously, if it was in a different tongue, we
14 would have a very difficult time
15 communicating.

16 Reading and writing is
17 fundamental, and what I'm saying is that,
18 aside from textbook and tapes and classroom,
19 it takes a bit more, actually a lot more --
20 offline if you will, at home, on the
21 playground, on the street. And I'm not
22 talking about street lingo. I'm talking about

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1 language where you are intelligibly
2 communicating one with another.

3 I did want to bring to this
4 Board's attention, if you don't know it
5 already, the D.C. Language Access Act, which
6 is law. And it indicates here the Act's
7 phased implementation, the Act applied on its
8 effective date to District of Columbia public
9 schools.

10 Language Access Act is to be
11 enforced, and I have a number of copies here I
12 can pass up for the Board to peruse at your
13 convenience. It is enforced by the Office of
14 Human Rights.

15 In fact, they have a public
16 complaint form when there appears to be a
17 violation of -- and it deals with courts, for
18 instance, when you need an interpreter that's
19 not available. And where would justice -- I
20 didn't say "just ice" -- be if someone could
21 not intelligibly communicate with the court
22 and understand the proceedings?

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1 The same difference in the
2 classroom. So to wrap it up, I will pass up
3 the Language Access. It is a flyer that is
4 distributed by Office of Human Rights. And
5 then, the complaint form.

6 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
7 Mr. Sindram.

8 MR. SINDRAM: Thank you.

9 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Again, you
10 can pass the information to Jamikka over there
11 on the left, and she will make sure that we
12 all get a copy of it.

13 MR. SINDRAM: Very well.

14 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.
15 Thank you, sir.

16 Now, am I pronouncing your name --
17 Ms. Moisan?

18 MS. MOISAN: I'm Bonnie.

19 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Yes.

20 MS. MOISAN: I'm Bonnie Moisan.

21 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Yes.

22 MS. MOISAN: Okay.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: You're
2 next.

3 MS. MOISAN: Well, I want to thank
4 you for having us tonight. Thank you to --

5 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Pull the
6 mic a little closer.

7 MS. MOISAN: Thank you to all the
8 council members. I am an English language
9 teacher at Stoddart Elementary. This is my
10 ninth year at the same school in the District.

11 Keep in mind that what I am going
12 to talk about this evening is really comparing
13 the DCPS standards and the WIDA standards, so
14 that might help. An analogy here would
15 contribute to the understanding, the
16 distinction -- or the distinction between DCPS
17 standards and WIDA.

18 Students in the fourth grade are
19 expected to meet the standard of jumping a
20 four-foot hurdle before advancing to the next
21 grade level. It will be assumed that there
22 has been sufficient research to establish this

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1 age appropriateness of this task for the
2 fourth graders.

3 This assignment or standard,
4 however, gives us no instruction or guidelines
5 on how to accomplish this. There are several
6 aspects that need to be addressed, since each
7 student enters the class with different
8 ability levels.

9 How the task is to be accomplished
10 is entirely up to the teacher. Experienced
11 teachers understand that certain techniques
12 and methodologies work better than others.
13 There is a generally agreed-upon analysis of
14 the task and to components.

15 It is known that students focus
16 their efforts more effectively, and, thus,
17 make stepwise progress towards the end goal
18 when each component is taken separately, and
19 just beyond their ability or zone of proximal
20 development. So we build it up a bit.

21 For the task of jumping a hurdle,
22 these components may include running fast,

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1 developing physical stamina, springing up on
2 one leg, developing balance, and so on. Of
3 course, this is only an illustration, but it
4 would be reasonable to expect that most, if
5 not all, of such skills would be taught
6 explicitly to beginning jumpers.

7 Given that teachers are faced with
8 teaching standards, guidance that has proven
9 to be classroom effective in all aspects of
10 teaching to each standard would contribute
11 enormously to student achievement. The fact
12 is that the DCPS standards do not give
13 teachers any such breakdown of skills or
14 academic materials. In other words, we are on
15 our own to teach the DCPS standards.

16 In my opinion, it is -- WIDA is
17 engaged in providing teachers a roadmap of
18 teaching basic language standards in
19 conjunction with the DCPS standards. This
20 roadmap has great potential to optimize the
21 effectiveness of a teacher's teaching and
22 student achievement. The WIDA standards

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1 provide examples of what a student should be
2 able to do within a content standard,
3 depending on the language proficiency of that
4 student. So whether that student is maybe a
5 non-speaker, a new speaker, been with us a few
6 months.

7 Let's just take a look at one DCPS
8 standard. Academic standard -- distinguish
9 fact from opinion. We need to teach that to
10 ELL students, to English language learners.

11 It is the job of the teachers to
12 bring these ELLs up to that standard. Many
13 ELLs have no English at all, or they have been
14 maybe with us for part of an instructional
15 year. Therefore, the starting point is all
16 very different. We use the WIDA to assess and
17 look at -- for language lessons and progress.

18 There must be a certain level of
19 language proficiency before even attempting
20 the content standard. It is important, then,
21 to be able to evaluate each student and
22 identify his or her readiness in regards to

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1 that standard. Only then can that standard
2 itself become the focus of an effective
3 classroom session. Guidance and support
4 during early developmental stages makes all
5 the difference in the world, and WIDA
6 standards establishes this base.

7 With the use of WIDA --

8 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I'm going
9 to have to ask you to wrap up. We're about a
10 minute over.

11 MS. MOISAN: Wrap up? Okay.
12 Basically, what I am trying to say here is
13 that what we are doing is we are breaking this
14 down like learning how to run -- jump a
15 hurdle. With WIDA, the steps are broken down
16 with the English language and how to bring an
17 entering -- a beginning student, moving them
18 to make progress to actually become proficient
19 with the academic standards. So WIDA supplies
20 that base for us.

21 Thank you.

22 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you

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1 very much.

2 Ms. Muhawi?

3 MS. MUHAWI: Good evening,
4 everybody, and thanks for giving us the
5 opportunity to testify on behalf of our ELL
6 students tonight.

7 My testimony actually will be
8 tailored about how we utilize the ELL
9 standards at Stoddart. I have been with DCPS
10 for -- this is my 20th year, and I have been
11 an ELL teacher and ACCESS chair for the last
12 17 years at Stoddart.

13 To give you an idea about Stoddart
14 and the English language learners there, it is
15 a multicultural school, has a very diversified
16 population. Out of our -- we have almost 28
17 countries represented at Stoddart. Out of the
18 292 students at Stoddart, we have 126 ELL --
19 sorry, language minority students. Out of
20 them, 95 are ELL learners, and they are ELL
21 learners because they come to Stoddart with a
22 language different than English.

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1 And their proficiency level does
2 not allow them to --

3 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: If you
4 could speak a little bit more into the
5 microphone, so they can pick you up.

6 MS. MUHAWI: Oh, sorry. And their
7 proficiency level does not allow them to fully
8 participate in the general education program
9 of the school.

10 So what is the expectations for
11 Stoddart's ELL students? Number one would be
12 to meet the same high academic standards as
13 the mainstream; and, two, to demonstrate
14 improvement in their English proficiency
15 language every year.

16 What kind of instructional
17 programs we use at Stoddart -- and I know that
18 you stressed a lot about the pull-out ELL. We
19 do pull-out only for those who come to the
20 country and they are non-English speakers, but
21 we don't have any curriculum isolation. Just
22 to answer your question.

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1 We fully cooperate with the
2 teachers, and we work on exactly what the
3 teachers are working in the classroom, but we
4 break it down in a simpler manner. We have
5 content-based ELL, and then we have the
6 inclusion program as well.

7 Now, what standards are ELL
8 students held accountable to learn? Same
9 thing like the mainstream. Academic
10 achievements, District of Columbia
11 Comprehensive Assessment System, the DC CAS,
12 then we have the levels for K and 5 -- to 5,
13 and English language proficiency assessing
14 comprehension and communication for English,
15 which is the ACCESS.

16 Now, what kind of practices we use
17 for the ELL instructions, at Stoddart again,
18 it is exactly the same -- integration of
19 language and content by examining the DCPS
20 standardized standards and the WIDA ELL
21 standards, to determine the content area
22 language to be taught. So we do not work in

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1 isolation; we use both.

2 And then, we promote standards-
3 based classrooms, which is DCPS standards and
4 WIDA ELL standards at the same time.
5 Cooperative learning groups, hands-on
6 experiences, and use of visuals and
7 manipulatives, scaffolding and connecting to
8 prior knowledge, we use data-driven
9 instruction, high expectations, and
10 challenging standards.

11 Collaboration with mainstream
12 teachers -- and this is a must -- it is very
13 important that we, you know, like maintain the
14 collaboration with the mainstream teachers.

15 And we involve the parents a lot.

16 Parental involvement, in my opinion, is a
17 big-time, you know, step towards improvement
18 and the success of the ELL students at school.

19 And then, adaptation of materials,
20 where you could go up higher or lower
21 depending on the student's levels.

22 Now, how do we use the teaching

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1 and the learning framework to guide
2 instruction for the ELLs? At Stoddart again,
3 to ensure that rigorous instructional program,
4 we develop ambitious and measurable annual
5 student achievement goals that is aligned with
6 DCPS content standards and the English
7 proficiency standards. And this can be
8 achieved by using the ACCESS for ELL and DC
9 CAS. We look at the data, and we develop
10 these achievement goals.

11 Then, we develop the units that
12 are content-based and English proficiency
13 based. Then, we create objectives-driven
14 lesson plans, and the objectives are aligned,
15 again, with the D.C. content standards and the
16 ELL proficiency standards.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I'm going
18 to have to ask you to wrap up.

19 MS. MUHAWI: Okay.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Forty-five
21 seconds.

22 MS. MUHAWI: After that, just to

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1 give you an example -- for example for the
2 language of language arts. If I use, for
3 example, the main idea and the details, I go
4 to the second grade if I'm using the second
5 grade standards DCPS, and the third grade,
6 which talks about the graphic organizations
7 and main ideas and details.

8 And then, I go to the WIDA ELL
9 standards and break it down, like if I'm using
10 -- if I'm teaching Level 1 of the students who
11 are on ELL Level 1, then I go down and I
12 simplify my language and my lesson to blend
13 that with the other one. And you have the
14 example here.

15 And towards the end, I just want
16 to thank you very much and recommend that you
17 adopt and approve the WIDA standards to work
18 hand-in-hand with the DCPS standards.

19 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

20 MS. MUHAWI: Thank you very much.

21 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
22 very, very much, for your testimony. Thank

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1 all of you for your testimony.

2 Let me go to my colleagues on the
3 State Board. And I want to also acknowledge
4 the presence of our representative from Ward
5 8, William Lockridge, who has joined us. Oh,
6 and Laura Slover as well. We will start with
7 Ms. Wade for the questions.

8 MEMBER WADE: Yes. Ms. -- let me
9 see, from Stoddart. I'm sorry, I don't have
10 your name. From Stoddart? Yes.

11 MS. MUHAWI: Ms. Muhawi or Ms. --
12 me?

13 MEMBER WADE: Yes, you.

14 MS. MUHAWI: Yes.

15 MEMBER WADE: Okay. Do the
16 students at Stoddart who are in the ELL or the
17 WIDA standards program take the DC CAS?

18 MS. MUHAWI: They do take the DC
19 CAS.

20 MEMBER WADE: Is it in English or
21 --

22 MS. MUHAWI: In English.

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1 MEMBER WADE: It is in English.

2 MS. MUHAWI: And that may be
3 something we could discuss later, you know, as
4 I --

5 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Speak into
6 the mic, so we can hear you.

7 MS. MUHAWI: Oh, I'm sorry. I
8 think it is really very challenging for them,
9 especially students who come to the country
10 within the first year to take the DC CAS and
11 it's very challenging and frustrating. And
12 we're trying our best to work with them as
13 much as possible to simplify the language and
14 work with them on grade level, but it hasn't
15 been successful.

16 And schools are not meeting the
17 AYPs because of this component, and we are
18 trying as much as possible, but it's very
19 frustrating for the kids. And I am hoping
20 that you are listening to this with good
21 spirit to try to make a difference in that
22 respect.

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1 MEMBER WADE: That is one of the
2 reasons I am concerned, because --

3 MS. MUHAWI: Right.

4 MEMBER WADE: -- of the AYP and
5 the CAS.

6 MS. MUHAWI: Right.

7 MEMBER WADE: And also, you said
8 you have 126 different --

9 MS. MUHAWI: Yes. We have 126
10 language minority students. But out of these
11 we have 95 of them who are ELL, and I would
12 assure you that we have maybe like 50 to 60
13 students who are non-English speakers. And we
14 learn, we teach them, I mean, and they work
15 very hard, and they try to make it and
16 mainstream them as much as possible. And we
17 do not work in isolation. I do have --

18 MEMBER WADE: So you have how many
19 ELL teachers there?

20 MS. MUHAWI: Three.

21 MEMBER WADE: Three?

22 MS. MUHAWI: Yes.

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1 MEMBER WADE: And you all can
2 speak all of those languages, or --

3 MS. MUHAWI: Not really.

4 MEMBER WADE: How do you handle
5 that?

6 MS. MOISAN: We are at the same
7 school, so we have --

8 MEMBER WADE: Okay.

9 MS. MOISAN: -- 26 different
10 languages this year at our school.

11 MS. MUHAWI: And, I mean, it's not
12 healthy to use their languages. You want them
13 to learn in English, and you want them to
14 adapt to the environment as much as possible,
15 and we encourage them to do that. But, you
16 know, we -- so far we have been successful at
17 it. I mean, we have almost 28 countries
18 represented at Stoddart. It's like a mini
19 United Nations.

20 MEMBER WADE: Thank you, and keep
21 up the good work.

22 MS. MUHAWI: Thank you so much.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
2 very much.

3 Ms. Slover?

4 MEMBER SLOVER: Thank you, Mr.
5 Trabue.

6 Welcome to all of you, and thank
7 you so much for coming. And I guess I should
8 start by saying, Mr. Sindram, I'm sorry that
9 your predicament has not changed since we
10 heard from you last week. And I hope that you
11 will keep us informed and let us know what we
12 can do to assist.

13 But I had some questions for --

14 MR. SINDRAM: Nothing will happen,
15 Ms. Slover, with all due respect, unless you
16 make it happen. So please help me help you
17 help us.

18 MEMBER SLOVER: I gotcha. I have
19 a couple questions for you all, and I
20 appreciate you sharing the work from your
21 experience at Stoddart.

22 There is a lot of discussion right

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1 now about the benefits of common standards.
2 There is an effort underway in math and
3 English, as you are probably aware, and I
4 really want to hear from you about what you
5 think are one of the promises of common
6 standards.

7 And WIDA is a consortium of a
8 number of states. I can't remember off the
9 top of my head how many, but we are talking
10 tonight about adopting a set of standards.
11 And I appreciate that you all are in support
12 of that.

13 Talk to us about the other tools
14 that have been available to you through the
15 participation in this consortium. The things
16 that -- a couple of things you mentioned were,
17 in particular, some of the teacher
18 assessments, the assessment -- the classroom
19 assessments, because one of the promises of
20 course of doing anything in common is that the
21 economies of scale allow one to then,
22 therefore, take advantage of the other tools

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1 that can be created.

2 So I wanted to hear a little bit
3 about those tools and how those have really
4 impacted you and your work.

5 MS. MOISAN: Are you referring to
6 the -- say we use the ACCESS testing? I know
7 we're using the --

8 MEMBER SLOVER: Yes. You
9 mentioned the tests, and then some of the
10 other tools that the WIDA consortium offers.
11 I think they offer some things along the lines
12 of professional development.

13 MS. MOISAN: Well --

14 MEMBER SLOVER: We had the
15 Executive Director here in December --

16 MS. MOISAN: Yes.

17 MEMBER SLOVER: -- Mr. Boals, and
18 he mentioned some of those things, and I
19 wanted to see if you had actually had the
20 opportunity to use some of those tools.

21 MS. MOISAN: Well, when they do
22 offer professional development, we do attend

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1 when they are available. We would actually
2 like to see more, and, as Hiam has said, I
3 think the -- we really encourage WIDA, if they
4 could, to develop not only more within each
5 domain but more professional development, I
6 think especially for new teachers who -- and I
7 think some of you talked about, how do you
8 take students from mainstream, and would this
9 -- would, you know, the kinds of things that
10 we do benefit? Definitely.

11 I think this is really the
12 teaching -- the kind of teaching we do is
13 really not isolated from the regular
14 classroom. And we coordinate with the regular
15 teachers in giving them information about how
16 we scaffold, how we work with, you know, the
17 students who come in. If they're in the
18 school system for, I believe it's 12 months --
19 I believe it's 12 months -- then they would
20 take the standardized tests.

21 So we are being asked to --
22 whatever tools we can use and are available,

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1 we use all of them, because we are -- if you
2 can imagine -- I don't know if you have
3 visited a foreign country, or learned a
4 foreign language, but put yourself in the
5 shoes of a student who comes to this country,
6 comes to our classroom, and we have to within
7 12 months of them being in school, whether
8 they come in the spring, it is broken up by
9 summer. They are in our classroom for 12
10 months, and we have to have them take the
11 standardized tests.

12 So whatever is available we use.
13 I don't know if I have really answered your
14 question, but whatever we --

15 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
16 very much.

17 Mr. Lockridge?

18 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Good evening.
19 Does all of your students at Stoddart
20 participate in some -- in an inclusion model?
21 Does the students who speak English also
22 participate in the program? And, if so, are

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1 all of the students, some of the students? At
2 Stoddart. Any one of you.

3 MS. MUHAWI: Do you want me to
4 answer that? We have the content-based ESL,
5 even if it's a pull-out program, only for the
6 kids who come only to the country, like say --

7 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: You have
8 to speak into the mic. We can't hear you.

9 MS. MUHAWI: Oh, I'm sorry. Let's
10 say a kid comes to the school today --

11 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Still not
12 -- pull it down.

13 MS. MUHAWI: All right. Let's say
14 a kid comes in today to the school and he
15 doesn't understand a word of English. My job
16 is to pull him out of the classroom for like
17 at least maybe two hours a day where I am
18 working on his math and on his reading, but
19 not in isolation. Whatever is --

20 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: That wasn't my
21 question. I'm saying that if -- I understand
22 what is happening in terms of the --

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1 MS. MUHAWI: Right.

2 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: -- non-English
3 speaking students.

4 MS. MUHAWI: Right.

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: I'm asking
6 about the English speaking students. Do they
7 participate jointly in any kind of Spanish or
8 any other kind of language at Stoddart?

9 MS. MOISAN: We don't have --

10 MS. MUHAWI: We don't have any --

11 MS. MOISAN: Right now, we don't.
12 Actually, that position was pulled this year.
13 We did have a Spanish teacher, but the
14 position was --

15 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: How important
16 do you think it is -- I mean, not -- I agree
17 that students who come into our school system
18 need to learn English, Spanish speaking and
19 otherwise. But I am also concerned with
20 English speaking students.

21 And since you said Spanish, you
22 had a Spanish teacher, in some communities and

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1 some jobs on the applications for those jobs
2 right now you have -- if I don't speak
3 Spanish, and a person comes in with equal --
4 pretty much equal qualifications for a
5 position, except for their languages, the
6 person with the Spanish is more likely the
7 English speaker to get a job than a non-
8 English speaking person.

9 So I'm concerned with this, and
10 it's a little off of what we -- the standard
11 here, but I think included in the standard, in
12 another different way it's some standard, it
13 ought to be the other way around as well,
14 because if the lack of students -- I know
15 several people who go out to get jobs. The
16 Spanish speaking person gets the jobs, they
17 speak English.

18 And I think it is -- we are moving
19 now into a situation where it is unequal, and
20 it is -- and because we are looking out for
21 one group or two groups, we are missing a
22 whole population of students who are not going

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1 to be prepared for the 21st century, because
2 there are numbers saying -- you can call me on
3 this if I'm wrong -- that by a certain time
4 the Spanish speaking -- this would almost be a
5 Spanish speaking country, because of the level
6 of Hispanics. It is the next minority in this
7 country.

8 And so no longer will we be
9 concerned about speaking Spanish as much --
10 even though English will be the primary
11 language, you need to speak both languages.
12 And so I want to be able to provide for that
13 same -- put that same energy and that same
14 enthusiasm you have, and concern, about
15 students who are just moving here, students
16 that have been here and their parents for two,
17 three decades, and they are not getting the
18 same quality of education from a non-English
19 speaking -- I mean, English speakers that the
20 non-English speakers are receiving.

21 So I guess at one point in time I
22 would like for this Board to really look

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1 serious about a standard that requires or a
2 requirement that would require the next
3 language besides English be Spanish, and that
4 it starts very early. The same rules that are
5 laid down for Spanish speakers or non-English
6 speaking students would be the same
7 requirements or standards for English speakers
8 learning to speak one of those other two
9 languages. And, in my mind, it would be
10 Spanish.

11 So I am in total agreement that we
12 should do something. I am going to support
13 these standards, but I would -- with the
14 understanding that this Board should be moving
15 in a similar direction, because if we are
16 preparing kids for the future, that is going
17 to be our future. And we ought to be
18 realistic about that at this point.

19 Even with the numbers you have
20 here, almost one -- a little less than one-
21 third of the students that you have that are
22 speaking I guess -- I don't know what language

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1 it is -- 95 speaking Spanish and -- is that
2 correct?

3 MS. MOISAN: No, no. Primarily,
4 we have --

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Primarily? How
6 much is "primarily"?

7 MS. MOISAN: Actually, that is one
8 of our -- for us, we don't have that many
9 Spanish speaking students, but we do have --

10 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Well, how many
11 -- give me a breakdown.

12 MS. MOISAN: We have a -- I think
13 our --

14 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: What is the
15 major --

16 MS. MOISAN: -- most of the
17 population is Russian. We --

18 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Russian?

19 MS. MOISAN: Russian speakers, and
20 Chinese.

21 MS. MUHAWI: Chinese. And,
22 actually, East Europeans, Middle Easterners.

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1 MS. MOISAN: We have French.

2 MS. MUHAWI: People from Africa,
3 from France.

4 MS. MOISAN: The Middle East.

5 MS. MUHAWI: Middle East, you
6 know. Spanish probably would have --

7 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: They are
8 getting a quality education here in the United
9 States.

10 MS. MUHAWI: Right.

11 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: As they come
12 here. And I'm just looking at the kids that
13 are already here in the United States that are
14 citizens, and what kind of education are they
15 going to receive in terms of learning
16 additional languages and making requirements?

17 And, you know, I understand we are
18 going to spend a lot of money in education,
19 and I just -- I have a feeling that I don't
20 want my son or my grandson -- I have a
21 grandson, a brand-new grandson, I want him to
22 have the same opportunity as another language,

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1 speaking another language. That shouldn't be
2 a right or a privilege that a person -- that a
3 person lives in the United States, a citizen
4 receives as a citizen.

5 And just like the students coming
6 in that are non-citizens, we are making big
7 waves for them, but we are forgetting about
8 the students who are citizens and preparing
9 them, so that they will be global. We are
10 preparing a group of students, no matter who
11 they are -- English learners -- I mean, non-
12 English speakers, whether it's China, whether
13 it's German, or whoever. We are preparing
14 them better for their future than we are our
15 own students.

16 I don't want us to get too far
17 ahead of ourselves in terms of what we provide
18 for students who are citizens of the United
19 States of America. In this district -- and I
20 understand that this is the nation's capital.

21 This should be the place where it starts and
22 it began.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Mr.
2 Lockridge, I --

3 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: And just what
4 do the embassies do to support this? These
5 are folks probably from some of their
6 countries, and they should be aware of this
7 and made to produce some money to support the
8 citizens that come here to move to be
9 citizens, but they are citizens of their
10 country.

11 I'm sorry.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
13 Mr. Lockridge. I think you bring up some
14 interesting points about our world language
15 standards, and I appreciate your comments.

16 Ms. Lord?

17 MEMBER LORD: Thank you very much,
18 and let me be the first to send the new
19 grandson a lullaby tape in Spanish or
20 Japanese.

21 Thank you to the panel. I would
22 like to explore a little further the notion of

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1 preparing our educators and our schools to
2 accept, accommodate, and help a growing number
3 of English language learners succeed.

4 In your professional opinion, do
5 you think that the WIDA standards are -- that
6 we are well positioned adopting the WIDA
7 standards to accommodate a growing number of
8 immigrant children? And if there are gaps,
9 could you point those out to us, so that we
10 could begin to think about what the next step
11 should be?

12 MS. MUHAWI: Do you want me to
13 talk about that? I think they need some work,
14 to be honest with you. I think they need to
15 be more comprehensive. I think they need to
16 handle more of content area, and I only will
17 use them as -- hand-in-hand with the content
18 area standards, unless they have -- unless
19 some work would be done on them to make them
20 more comprehensive and more content, you know,
21 like based, because, as I said, you don't want
22 the kids to learn in isolation, and you want

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1 them to function in the classroom as fast as
2 possible. So they need to be worked on more
3 than that.

4 MEMBER LORD: Ms. Moisan, do you
5 share that idea?

6 MS. MOISAN: I do. I think the
7 more professional development, the more
8 materials we have available and trained in,
9 the better off we'll be. I think as much as
10 the -- and the communication I think between
11 English language learners -- just like the CIA
12 and the Secret Service, we need communication
13 against the grade levels and against -- across
14 groups of teachers.

15 What is working? We need to know
16 what is working. Whether you are a regular
17 standardized teacher, whether you have, you
18 know, a group of learners that aren't doing so
19 well, what is working? There are teachers in
20 this district that know what works. They know
21 how to teach well, and I feel that along with
22 these standards, as a base WIDA standards,

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1 yes, if they could be extended more of -- more
2 examples, more guidance, yes, of course. All
3 teachers, you know, desire that.

4 But as it is now, you know, it's a
5 little different, because we are left to teach
6 the standards, the DCPS standards, on our own.

7 So it is a little different, so it would be
8 great to have.

9 MEMBER LORD: Another quickie,
10 some schools, notably Ross Elementary in my
11 neighborhood, has showed impressive gains with
12 English language learners on the DC CAS.
13 Could the WIDA standards that -- or practices
14 that are in place now in any way account for
15 some of those gains?

16 MS. MOISAN: I absolutely think
17 so. I think that what you do as an English
18 teacher, you take the language component, you
19 have to. Every standard I teach I use the
20 WIDA in that you are taking the language
21 component.

22 If I am teaching fact and opinion,

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1 I take phrases, I take language we use in
2 everyday talking to use -- to talk about how
3 to teach fact and opinion. When do we use the
4 word fact? When do we use the word opinion?
5 What phrases do we use? What's the grammar we
6 use? You break it down.

7 Any student across the District,
8 if they're not already familiar with that,
9 benefits from that kind of teaching. WIDA
10 gives us the base.

11 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.
12 Thank you very much.

13 Mr. Biddle?

14 MEMBER BIDDLE: Thank you. I've
15 got a couple of comments, and then a couple of
16 questions. So I think one of the things that
17 -- and this came out during the presentation
18 from WIDA that we got about a month ago, and
19 it has also actually come up when we have
20 talked about special education.

21 And that is, you know, the
22 principles that we are looking at in these

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1 standards really fundamentally are about what
2 good and sound teaching are, and I think that
3 sometimes people take their eye off the ball
4 and think, "Oh, wow, this is like new and
5 fantastic stuff that we are doing to somehow
6 support a group of students," when it is
7 actually what we ought to be doing for all of
8 our students. I mean, just the methodology
9 and the approach to make sure that students
10 master something is just -- it is just good
11 teaching.

12 And so I would hope that people --
13 and I am going to ask you all to continue to
14 advocate amongst your peers that what we are
15 doing, the English language learners, is
16 simply a good model for good instruction for
17 all children in all areas.

18 The second comment is I left up
19 here during the presentation to double-check
20 on something that I thought I remembered and I
21 was correct -- that in the standards and
22 assessment area that we are pursuing for our

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1 Race to the Top application, which is a big
2 potential federal grant, it is very big
3 actually, one of the things that we are
4 looking at is support for teachers in getting
5 the resources to help implement standards.

6 And one of the things that I have
7 raised on -- as we have passed standards over
8 the last few years is that it is great to pass
9 a strong set of standards that represents what
10 we want children to know. The challenge tends
11 to be the gap in between what the standard is
12 and the tools and resources that the teachers
13 have to actually teach those standards.

14 And having taught for many years,
15 I can -- sometimes that gap is more like a
16 chasm than it is a gap. And so I think that
17 that's one of the things that we have to
18 continue to be mindful of, because we can have
19 outstanding standards and no way to get from
20 here to there. So I think this is an
21 important thing to keep in mind. But we are
22 working on that.

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1 And to segue, I would be
2 interested in -- I'm going to throw three
3 questions at you, and whichever you can get to
4 I would love to hear. One, what types of
5 tools do you think that teachers would need to
6 be more effective in teaching these standards?

7 Two, how can we -- how can those tools be
8 made accessible, in what format? Whether
9 they're online, hard copy, or other ways to
10 get them to teachers. And then, how can
11 teachers be trained and supported in using the
12 tools, so they can teach to the mastery of the
13 standards?

14 So you've got about 45 seconds.
15 Whatever you can get in there, thanks.

16 MS. MUHAWI: I would think, you
17 know, like professional development is a big-
18 time component. And the possibility is before
19 school starts, you know, like to train
20 everybody on the standards or whatever is
21 coming our way, like the new teaching and
22 learning framework. That is a very new tool.

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1 And if you are not really seasoned and know
2 what you are doing, you can't pull the
3 standards framework and the ELL -- or the ELP
4 standards together to make a good unit and
5 good goals for the students.

6 So you really need to know exactly
7 what you are doing here, because it is
8 combining two sets of tools to make
9 successful, measurable goals for the kids
10 towards mastery. And so I think, you know,
11 like professional development is very, very
12 important for people to come into the
13 classroom at the beginning of the school year
14 knowing what they are exactly doing. And that
15 needs to be done, I'm afraid, before
16 schooltime, because once school starts there
17 is no time for professional development.

18 And the possibility of piloting
19 the programs and, you know, like knowing maybe
20 for a year's time you pilot it in certain
21 schools and see it works, you go with it, it
22 does not -- some tweaking and changing here

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1 and there. But to me professional
2 development, and parental involvement is
3 another component.

4 You know, parents really need to
5 know what they are doing as well with the
6 kids, because a teacher's hand does not clap
7 alone, you know. You need parental and
8 community involvement as well.

9 MEMBER BIDDLE: And actually -- I
10 realize that I have now run over my time, but
11 I am interested in the answer to this
12 question, so I am actually going to follow-up
13 with both of you to get more response on this
14 question. I want to respect the fact that I'm
15 over time, but I will follow-up with each of
16 you to get more information.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. MUHAWI: Great. Thank you so
19 much.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
21 Mr. Biddle, for respecting the time. Thank
22 you.

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1 We have our last question on this
2 first round from Ms. Douglas.

3 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Yes. Good
4 evening. I'm glad to have you here.

5 I have some concerns. I overheard
6 you mention that some students are given two
7 hours to try to learn the English language
8 kind of isolated. So what type of instruction
9 or teacher that's there, or aide, is helping
10 the young male or female that is having
11 difficulty struggling to learn English? So
12 when you put them aside for two hours, so how
13 -- how do you assess that, and what data are
14 you using to see -- comparing with the others
15 how well that person is excelling in their
16 education and learning our language?

17 MS. MUHAWI: I could answer to
18 that. They are not pulled for two hours
19 during the daytime. They are pulled during
20 the language arts period, and they are non-
21 English speakers who do not speak one word of
22 English.

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1 So what happens is like we
2 scaffold. Like if I'm getting second and
3 third graders who speak no word of English, we
4 go back to the basics of the language. We go
5 back to the basics of first grade,
6 kindergarten, whatever, and work it out
7 starting with the alphabets to the phonics to
8 the sounding system, and so forth, to try to
9 build them up where they come to the
10 comprehension of first grade content area,
11 curriculum, and, you know, like math and
12 reading, and so forth.

13 So you try to build all of that
14 with them, so once they are in the classroom
15 they can function. And so that is just to
16 expedite the process a little bit more.

17 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Okay. My other
18 question -- thank you. My other question, I
19 was concerned -- I know that Spanish is one of
20 the criterion of teaching in D.C. public
21 schools and charters. But I am finding the
22 younger -- other kids that are -- does not

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1 speak English, they have a tendency to learn,
2 too.

3 So comparing -- putting the two
4 together, how -- is there any way, data that
5 you can compare to see -- what data do you use
6 to compare how well they are doing with group
7 learning, you know, with their peers? Because
8 sometimes they learn quicker with their peers.

9 Is there a process that you all
10 use in grouping those kids together with their
11 peers? Because they can get on that telephone
12 and listen to the music and learn it real
13 quick. So what kind of tools are you using to
14 help them to learn English better and quicker?

15 MS. MOISAN: To learn English
16 better and quicker.

17 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Right.

18 MS. MOISAN: Well, remember, they
19 are -- we are not doing this in isolation.
20 Even though we -- if we do pull out, we use
21 the same standards, so we are using the same
22 -- we are using the same content. We may

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1 present it differently. We may rewrite it.
2 We may simplify it. We may act it out. We
3 might use a lot of pictures.

4 But we are really -- if you think
5 about this, you have a student who comes from
6 another country. It's a fourth grade student.

7 The student is a fourth grader in his or her
8 country. So we keep them on the same content
9 level. As far as content, they are good, but
10 we just have to get them to learn the language
11 piece. So when they get enough English, the
12 communication really takes off with their
13 peers.

14 Peer learning is a little bit more
15 difficult. We do partner them in a lot of
16 activities. But when you are learning a
17 second language or a third language, sometimes
18 we have third or fourth languages even being
19 learned, we really focus on the English.

20 So we are not looking at taking on
21 another language. I'm not really sure I
22 understood your question completely. But if

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1 we're taking up Spanish, that is another --
2 that would be another area that would be more
3 difficult.

4 And so we really focus our English
5 language learners just on learning English,
6 but we do partner them, as I say, and in the
7 classroom they are keeping up with, as much as
8 they can, with the content. Our job is to
9 just keep building that content through
10 language. Does that help?

11 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Okay. Thank you.

12 Well, you really -- in a sense you did, but I
13 appreciate what you are sharing with me. But
14 I would like to know, what is the data? So we
15 can speak on this later, because my time is
16 up.

17 MS. MOISAN: Okay. Well --

18 MEMBER DOUGLAS: And I can get
19 back with you.

20 MS. MOISAN: Okay.

21 MEMBER DOUGLAS: But I wanted to
22 know, what are the -- what's the quality of

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1 our Spanish teachers that are in the
2 classroom? And I can see the percentage in
3 that as well, to help these students. So
4 that's another --

5 MS. MOISAN: We don't have that
6 data, actually. I mean, we could get it for
7 the District, but we have not had a second
8 language, but, I mean, I -- like Spanish or we
9 had Chinese at our school. We have had
10 different languages, but they have been an
11 after-school program.

12 So I do know that the bilingual
13 programs work very well. I mean, there is
14 data out there that you could get from the
15 District that shows high success in these
16 areas.

17 MS. MUHAWI: Maybe that would
18 reflect on your question. Probably like when
19 they are familiar with their own languages,
20 the content area, they could switch and
21 transfer that language from Spanish to
22 English, English to Spanish, you know, and

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1 that helps a lot.

2 When they are maybe coming to our
3 country here, and they really fully prepared
4 in their own language on the third grade level
5 or fourth grade level, then they switch the
6 information, they switch the content,
7 especially in math.

8 So they do tend to do better in
9 math, and we do our daily assessments, you
10 know, like the portfolios and the testing and
11 the, you know, different instruments that the
12 teachers do design. And we have our own, you
13 know, like assessments, but not necessarily
14 the standardized testing that DCPS has --

15 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

16 MS. MUHAWI: -- to support that.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
18 very much.

19 MS. MUHAWI: Hopefully, that
20 answered your question.

21 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I would
22 like to thank our second panel for being here

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1 this evening. Thank you very much for your
2 testimony and your presentations.

3 Mr. Sindram, you had one quick
4 comment?

5 MR. SINDRAM: I wanted to make you
6 aware, Mr. Chair, that the Commission on Human
7 Rights is meeting in the conference room,
8 1117, and I did want to meet with you offline.

9 So if we can connect at the conclusion --

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE:
11 Absolutely. After the meeting we can talk.

12 MR. SINDRAM: Yes. Yes, sir.
13 Thank you.

14 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: No
15 problem. Thank you.

16 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Thank you.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Okay.
18 Thank you.

19 We will now move to our third
20 panel of the evening, which is Micki Suchenski
21 from Garrison Elementary School, Karen Wesley
22 from H.D. Cooke Elementary School, and Marvin

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1 Tucker.

2 I hope I didn't mispronounce your
3 name.

4 MS. SUCHENSKI: No, you did a very
5 good job. And for the record, I work for the
6 Office of Bilingual Education, which is housed
7 at Garrison Elementary.

8 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Oh, okay.
9 I just have it listed here as Garrison
10 Elementary School. Thank you for the
11 clarification.

12 MS. SUCHENSKI: Can you hear me
13 okay?

14 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Yes. You
15 may proceed.

16 MS. SUCHENSKI: Okay. Good
17 evening, members of the Board. I am --

18 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Pull the
19 microphone a little closer.

20 MS. SUCHENSKI: Pull it a little
21 bit closer? Okay. Is that better?

22 And thank you for inviting us to

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1 provide testimony tonight on the WIDA English
2 language proficiency standards.

3 My name is Micki Suchenski, and I
4 was a teacher of ELLs in DCPS for 10-1/2
5 years. Currently, I am working for the Office
6 of Bilingual Education for DCPS as an
7 independent contractor. Part of my
8 responsibility serving in this capacity
9 includes providing professional development
10 for teachers on the WIDA ELP standards.

11 Tonight I will highlight my role
12 as a professional developer working
13 collaboratively with other teachers of ELLs,
14 members of the WIDA consortium, and the Center
15 for Applied Linguistics, CAL, one of the WIDA
16 consortium's partners.

17 The ELP standards differ from the
18 state academic content standards in that they
19 focus on the language needed used by ELLs to
20 succeed in school. They serve as a guide from
21 which teachers can differentiate both
22 instructional and assessment activities

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1 according to their students' various English
2 language proficiency levels.

3 DCPS became a member of the WIDA
4 consortium in 2003. From that time on, our
5 school district has benefitted tremendously
6 from this membership. One of the benefits of
7 membership in the WIDA consortium is the
8 ongoing professional development they provide
9 to member states.

10 For example, in D.C., all ELL
11 teachers from both DCPS and the D.C. public
12 charter schools, have received professional
13 development on the WIDA ELP standards from the
14 lead developer, Dr. Margo Gottlieb, at least
15 several times during my tenure. She provided
16 many -- many of the materials she helped to
17 develop for these trainings became the basis
18 for many of the follow-up trainings OBE
19 provided for teachers across a school
20 district.

21 In addition, our office has also
22 offered trainings for all teachers who serve

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1 ELLs on the WIDA ELP standards at both the
2 local school level and through OBE's
3 professional development course offerings.

4 According to our latest student
5 fact sheet for school year 2009-2010, ELLs
6 make up 9.3 percent of the total DCPS
7 population, and they are spread out across the
8 city and approximately 105 schools. So
9 holding training on these ELP standards has
10 been very important, not only to the teachers
11 of ELLs but to all teachers who serve them.

12 DCPS has benefitted by -- also by
13 receiving technical assistance from CAL, one
14 of WIDA's partners, with its trainings on the
15 ACCESS for ELLs, the annual English language
16 proficiency test given to all ELL students,
17 and on the WAPT, the initial screener test for
18 ELL students.

19 In addition, CAL has also provided
20 assistance to our office with the ELL
21 portfolio rating benchmark project in which
22 teachers and colleagues from OBE have been

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1 actively involved. As a result of this
2 project, we produced binders of writing tasks
3 and benchmark papers to assist teachers with
4 scoring of student rating and creating their
5 own writing tasks using the WIDA ELP
6 standards.

7 Currently, we are conducting
8 follow-up training at the local schools upon
9 request, and we plan to facilitate more
10 training in the future.

11 Seven years of hard work have
12 followed the introduction of the WIDA ELP
13 standards. We have accomplished much, but
14 still have more work to do, and we feel
15 confident that an official adoption of the
16 WIDA ELP standards would provide us the
17 continued resources and technical support
18 necessary to continue its momentum.

19 Thank you for your time.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
21 very much for your testimony.

22 Ms. Wesley?

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1 MS. WESLEY: Good evening, and
2 thank you for having me here tonight. Can you
3 hear me okay?

4 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Yes,
5 you're fine.

6 MS. WESLEY: I'm soft-spoken. As
7 a nine-year ESL teacher, I can attest to the
8 positive impact of using WIDA's English
9 language proficiency standards from pre-K to
10 12 in alignment with DCPS's learning
11 standards. WIDA's ELP standards do more than
12 assess English language development and
13 production. They also specify the types and
14 areas of language development most ELL
15 students encounter in the social/academic
16 environment of school.

17 This is critical to student
18 achievement and ESL educator accountability
19 and effectiveness. For example, the language
20 domains and the performance or can-do
21 indicators better clarify an ELL student's
22 progress. WIDA's grade level clusters,

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1 topics, and genres reflect the sets of
2 language skills generally attained from early
3 childhood through high school.

4 These standards are also directly
5 aligned to the ACCESS language proficiency
6 test. An ELL student portfolio does contain
7 student work and tests that have been
8 consistently graded and assessed. WIDA's
9 formative and summative ELP standards enable
10 ESL educators to better chart their students'
11 development over the academic year.

12 In addition, four of the five
13 standard areas cover the areas of language
14 arts, mathematics, science, and social
15 studies. The fifth standard covers
16 instructional and social language, which
17 encompasses how ELL students communicate,
18 demonstrate, and make comprehensible
19 connections. These are skills that all
20 students need to achieve success.

21 All five ELP standards also
22 provide ESL and mainstream teachers alike a

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1 means of better understanding an ELL student's
2 language development, as well as aligning
3 pertinent language and content learning
4 standards. In all, no set of academic
5 standards are truly viable without effective
6 teaching and learning environments.

7 WIDA's ELP standards have helped
8 to increase that efficacy for me, and on a
9 larger scale they can help provide key ties
10 between ELD and academic content, which can
11 only benefit the ELL student.

12 Thank you.

13 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.

14 Thank you very much.

15 Mr. Tucker, it's good to see you
16 again.

17 MR. TUCKER: Good evening to the
18 Board. And thank you, as a parent and a voter
19 in the District of Columbia. I'm glad to be
20 here, and I thank the Board for having this
21 opportunity to speak.

22 As a parent, to sit here and

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1 listen to this -- and I understand that the
2 Board hasn't adopted a lot of things. But
3 there is a three-headed monster in the D.C.
4 public school system. You're talking about
5 ESL, special ed, and general education.

6 This Board and this city has
7 failed the students of the District of
8 Columbia, because we still haven't come up
9 with a standard that brings all three together
10 to make us a whole entity. We can sit here
11 and say that we are missing the boat on
12 certain things, and we do miss the boat,
13 because we have special ed students that have
14 the same problems that ESL students have, even
15 though they don't speak a foreign language.
16 We haven't still found a way to help those
17 special ed students.

18 So for me as a parent to see here
19 and hear people that deal with ESL on a
20 regular basis, the other side of that flip
21 coin, you can fill this room up with children
22 with special needs, that have the same

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1 parents, that have the same teachers, that
2 have the same problems that these folks at ESL
3 have.

4 So if this Board is going to adopt
5 a standard -- and I want to take you back into
6 a little FYI. We have had seven
7 superintendents -- Dr. Massie, Dr. Vance, Dr.
8 White -- we have adopted the Massachusetts
9 standards, we have adopted all of these
10 standards. We adopted the state standard now
11 for D.C. Public Schools, so that our children
12 can come up to par.

13 We are still failing, and let's be
14 realistic. It is time to stop playing
15 politics with our children, and we are playing
16 politics, because every year you will come up
17 with a different standard to help a different
18 student. So if this standard is good for ESL,
19 why isn't it good for the general population?

20 Then, what happens to the special needs
21 student that still doesn't get the same
22 opportunities?

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1 So this Board, this State Board --
2 and I want to go back to something you said,
3 Mr. Biddle, if you are going to get federal
4 dollars, then let federal dollars be used in a
5 way that it best suits the students, not to
6 companies that end up in bankruptcy. And our
7 State Board and our State Superintendent's
8 office have failed us.

9 So, and from looking at it from a
10 parent standpoint, I want to see every student
11 get the opportunity to learn English. And,
12 Mr. Lockridge, you are right, because we are
13 in an age now where if you don't speak
14 Spanish, and you've got a Spanish customer,
15 then you have to -- that Spanish customer now
16 goes out the door.

17 So, technically, we now as a
18 parent, parent body, because the D.C. Coaches
19 Association uses something that nobody else
20 understands, we are using sports and the arts
21 to combat illiteracy. And in our game, we use
22 the Model School for the Deaf, who plays. You

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1 couldn't tell me if those kids didn't know
2 what the count was. They play just like every
3 student -- other student, and they
4 participated.

5 So why can't we find one common
6 goal to meet this three-headed monster that we
7 have and that you are trying to come together
8 with?

9 Thank you.

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Mr.
11 Tucker, I sincerely appreciate your comments.
12 And, as always, it is good to see you.
13 You're a week early, though, because we -- I
14 want to say we -- it's not that we are
15 ignoring the subject matter that you are
16 discussing. We are going to have a briefing
17 next week --

18 MR. TUCKER: Sure.

19 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: -- on
20 what's going on on special education. So I
21 hope that you will join us again next week.

22 MR. TUCKER: Well, I just think

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1 it's -- I just think it's part of what you are
2 trying to do, because you can't separate the
3 two or the three.

4 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Right. I
5 understand.

6 MR. TUCKER: Because you are
7 talking about ESL, sure, you are talking about
8 students that want to learn the English
9 language. But you also have to say to those
10 students, "Can you put the dollars behind them
11 to get to where these people are trying to get
12 to?"

13 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Right.

14 MR. TUCKER: And in a time of
15 crisis -

16 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: That's why
17 I want to make sure that you come back next
18 week --

19 MR. TUCKER: Sure.

20 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: -- so you
21 will hear what we're doing --

22 MR. TUCKER: Sure.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: -- in that
2 realm as well.

3 Let me ask you, Ms. Suchenski,
4 from a practical standpoint, let us understand
5 -- because you said you do professional
6 development. About how many hours, days, do
7 you go out to the schools and do this one on
8 one, or in groups? Or do the people come to
9 you? Just from a practical standpoint, start
10 us off with how your work actually gets
11 accomplished.

12 MS. SUCHENSKI: Sure. And I
13 recently transitioned from working full-time
14 to now doing contractual work. But the work
15 that I have been involved with this year has
16 been focused on working on this English
17 language learner portfolio writing benchmark
18 project, which Karen has been a member of, and
19 also Deborah Maatta.

20 We have a group of teachers that
21 came together for a whole year last year, and
22 participated in developing these writing

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1 tasks, and then we disseminated these writing
2 tasks to students, to all of the ELL students
3 in the city, and then we came back together
4 and developed these benchmark papers. And
5 that was the project last year.

6 This year we are implementing it,
7 and we are providing training. So, for
8 example, last week I was at CHEC, the Columbia
9 Heights Educational Campus, two days a week
10 providing training for the teachers there on
11 this project and developing writing
12 assessments that they can use for their
13 English language learners.

14 This week, at the end of this
15 week, I will be going to Wilson High School.
16 So there are a number of different -- we
17 sometimes offer courses for teachers. I am
18 also teaching a course, as well as my
19 colleague, Deborah Maatta, who also testified
20 on designing special -- it is a course called
21 SDAIE, Specially Designed Academic Instruction
22 of English, which I am offering at Garrison

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1 Elementary.

2 And that is available to all
3 teachers who serve English language learners.

4 They can be a general ed teacher, they can be
5 a special ed teacher. If there are ELL
6 students in their school, they are welcome to
7 take those classes.

8 So I do both. I go out to local
9 schools and also --

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Okay.
11 That's good to know. I mean, a number of the
12 panelists this evening -- and I think if you
13 ever hear the discussions going on around the
14 State Board on a normal level, you will hear
15 the need for more professional development.
16 Everyone is crying out, "We need more
17 professional development."

18 When you go to Wilson next week,
19 about how many hours will you actually be able
20 to spend with the teachers?

21 MS. SUCHENSKI: It is actually --
22 this week is --

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: And is
2 that taking them away from t heir own
3 classrooms, so that their students --

4 MS. SUCHENSKI: No, this --

5 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: -- are
6 deprived of their -- or is this after school,
7 before school? You know, I mean, how does it
8 work?

9 MS. SUCHENSKI: This Friday is one
10 of those job-embedded professional development
11 days.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Oh, this
13 Friday.

14 MS. SUCHENSKI: Right, right.

15 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Okay. I
16 thought you said next week.

17 MS. SUCHENSKI: So this Friday --

18 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I know
19 this Friday there is no school. Yes, so it's
20 --

21 MS. SUCHENSKI: And then, in the
22 past, like other teachers have said, we use

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1 the morning collaborative time. So it -- but
2 it would really be helpful to have more time
3 with --a lot of the schools do want the
4 professional development and they are limited
5 by that school day or those special job-
6 embedded professional development days.

7 But we usually get requests from
8 the teachers or principals, and then sometimes
9 they have us come after school hours also
10 during their faculty meetings.

11 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: All right.
12 Thank you. Thank you very much.

13 MS. SUCHENSKI: You're welcome.

14 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Questions
15 from the members of the State Board? Ms.
16 Douglas, and then Ms. Lord.

17 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Yes. I was
18 hearing you speaking on special development.
19 I can recall when special development was an
20 automatic thing to help the teachers to help
21 with their classroom in the past. So I think
22 that needs to be implemented again, along with

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1 the special needs, like Mr. Tucker has
2 mentioned.

3 And we do not want to leave out
4 special needs, because we have so many that
5 are special needs that we really don't -- we
6 still have not identified all of them. And so
7 we need to be really careful, because those
8 two need to be on the same level as the other
9 and be treated fairly. So we don't want to
10 lose that.

11 And I'm glad to hear that you all
12 have -- that you are having some training for
13 our teachers, but I know Title I, which would
14 be Chapter 1, they have that as an ongoing
15 process.

16 So you also need to have special
17 training for our parents as well, and that is
18 important. And we are leaving that out. I
19 know we are speaking a lot about the ELL and
20 others, but have -- what have -- have you
21 implemented a partnership or engaged a
22 parent's involvement with this process? And

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1 that is one of the things that I have not
2 heard from either group that spoke on that,
3 and that's really important.

4 Can I get an answer from someone,
5 please?

6 MS. WESLEY: I can only speak for
7 what we do at H.D. Cooke. Ever since we went
8 back to the mainstream ESL model, we have been
9 trying to use Family Nights as a way to get
10 more parental involvement, because we have
11 such a high ELL population. And within that
12 ELL population, we have a high SPED population
13 as well. So the two issues for us do come
14 together. They really do.

15 So we have been trying to use
16 Family Night as a means to get parents more
17 involved in the process of understanding what
18 the standards are and understanding what
19 issues their children have to face, but at the
20 same time letting them know that, as parents,
21 they are the first teachers, and that we all
22 have to work together to ensure the greater

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1 student achievement for everybody. We are all
2 in it together.

3 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Thank you. Glad
4 to hear that.

5 MS. SUCHENSKI: I guess I can
6 speak. I am no longer in the classroom, but
7 when I was the nice thing about having the ELP
8 standards -- and I think you asked an earlier
9 question about how do we assess or evaluate
10 students in their English language
11 proficiency.

12 The ACCESS for ELLs is the annual
13 state test -- the annual test that is given to
14 all ELLs every year, and there are results
15 from that test that are given directly to the
16 parents. And we also keep portfolios for the
17 students, so we are able to give the parents
18 and talk to the parents, usually at parent-
19 teacher conferences but also whenever -- as
20 teachers, when we meet with parents and want
21 to talk with them, we can use some of the data
22 from those -- from that specific test, and

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1 also samples.

2 I mean, I have been involved also
3 on working -- developing formative assessments
4 that teachers can use with these ELP
5 standards. But it is nice that we are able to
6 have this data that is directly aligned to the
7 ELP standards to share with the parents as
8 well.

9 I also agree, I think, you know,
10 as a district as a whole, we need to do a
11 better job as getting -- in getting parents
12 involved in our students' education.

13 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
14 very much.

15 Ms. Lord?

16 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Thank you. You
17 answered my question. Thank you.

18 MEMBER LORD: Thank you. Ms.
19 Wesley, you said in your testimony that these
20 are skills all students need to achieve
21 success. So I would like to ask both you
22 former and current classroom teachers, is

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1 there much overlap with professional
2 development and content teachers? Or is this
3 even something that is envisioned?

4 And then, my second question is,
5 really, English language learners or immigrant
6 populations tend to be fairly transient. Is
7 there something we should be thinking about in
8 the future that would support those students
9 who may go from school to school and not --
10 may be in your classroom half a year and your
11 classroom half a year?

12 MS. SUCHENSKI: I can answer the
13 second question. The first thing that came to
14 mind was affordable housing, so they don't
15 move across the city. I think that's an
16 easier question.

17 But the first question that you
18 are talking about, can you, again, just sort
19 of articulate a little bit more about the
20 question?

21 MEMBER LORD: It was really
22 talking to Mr. Tucker's point and Ms. Wesley's

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1 point about how these are the skills that all
2 students need to achieve success, so we are
3 measuring them against proficiency, against
4 comprehension, against writing. And it
5 occurred to me, and it has come up in
6 conversations before, that these are the
7 skills that all students can benefit from.

8 So is there much conversation
9 about professional development for both
10 regular and ELL teachers? Or is it going on
11 informally, for example, in H.D. Cooke?

12 MS. WESLEY: At H.D. Cooke, in
13 fact, we recently had a professional
14 development day where the teams -- the ESL
15 teachers and the content area teachers -- met
16 together to better align the lesson planning
17 for all of the students, because we -- we have
18 a combination of push and pull-out, but we do
19 more inclusion than pull-out.

20 So, therefore, as ESL teachers, we
21 are able to utilize the standards and expose
22 all of the students, regardless of their

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1 strengths and weaknesses, to this.

2 MS. SUCHENSKI: And I would say I
3 definitely think there is overlap. And in the
4 professional development that I have done,
5 there has been always a mixture of ELL
6 teachers, special ed teachers, general ed
7 teachers. And when I was at CHEC last week,
8 in fact, it was a mixture of these teachers.

9 And the general ed teachers, who
10 were the English language arts teachers, were
11 talking about how they saw a need for all
12 students to be developing the academic
13 language. But, really, the ELP standards is
14 talking about the academic language that
15 students need to be successful in school.

16 And I actually was at one of the
17 Race to the Top assessment meetings in Denver.

18 This one was geared specifically towards
19 ELLs, and that whole discussion was about how
20 all of our students are deficient in the
21 academic language. And so I think that there
22 is this overlap, because we are all working

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1 towards that same goal.

2 And I have heard a number of Board
3 members talk about that tonight, and that is a
4 big component of the WIDA ELP standards and
5 the testing that goes with it, is that we --
6 we want to make sure that all our students
7 will be successful in school and be able to
8 develop that language and those skills that
9 will ensure success.

10 So, yes, I do see a lot of overlap
11 there.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.
13 Thank you very much.

14 Mr. Lockridge?

15 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Do you support
16 the standards that we have before us for
17 approval, for the Board to approve tonight?
18 Do you support them? And, if not, what part
19 of the standards do you think that the Board
20 needs to take a closer look at?

21 And the second part of my question
22 is that -- do you have an idea, a ballpark

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1 idea, of what it would cost to implement a
2 standard -- if it's approved, the standards
3 that we have before us? And if you just know
4 the part in teacher training or development,
5 then let -- you know, let me know what that
6 cost might be in your mind, and what it would
7 really take to move these standards to where
8 -- so when the kids graduate they have met the
9 standards and the terms of -- and that is in
10 terms of what the cost would be.

11 We could -- there are a lot of
12 programs that we vote for, a lot of standards.

13 But when it gets down -- when the rubber hits
14 the road, is it, do we have the finances and
15 the funds available to make the standards
16 work? So, basically, that is the second part
17 of my question.

18 I don't have an idea of what this
19 would cost, and the State Board we -- even
20 though the standards come to us, most of the
21 time they come to us without a budget of what
22 they think it would cost. And we pass it, and

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1 we move on. We don't even know if it can be
2 implemented, because we don't know what the
3 implications -- the cost implications are.

4 And then, we really -- at the end
5 of the day, I don't know how we measure the
6 success of the program other than the test
7 scores. We can't measure them as it is moving
8 in real time, to go back and say, "We need to
9 revisit a standard," something in the standard
10 that it for some reason is not working or
11 needs to be tweaked. And so we don't have
12 that in place.

13 I think those are important to me,
14 because I can see, as we move along, have we
15 made, like you said before, the benchmarks
16 that we're looking for realistically. And
17 does the system have the money to support it?

18 MS. SUCHENSKI: Okay. To answer
19 your first question, I wholeheartedly think
20 that we should adopt these standards. Like I
21 said in my testimony, we have gained a lot of
22 momentum. We have -- they have been in place

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1 actively since 2004. We became a member of
2 the consortium in 2003. We have a lot of
3 benefits.

4 I curtailed a little bit of my
5 testimony to fit the time, but we have had a
6 number of professional development workshops
7 done by WIDA consortium members, I mean,
8 especially having the lead developer do a lot
9 of the professional development was wonderful
10 for our teachers. And we would like to have
11 more of that and more benefit from being a
12 part of the consortium.

13 One of CAL -- one of the WIDA
14 consortium's partners is the Center for
15 Applied Linguistics, which is here in D.C. We
16 have also benefitted tremendously, because
17 they are the ones that develop the ACCESS for
18 ELLs test, which is aligned with those
19 standards. And so they have also been able to
20 give us a lot of technical assistance.

21 And Karen is sitting right next to
22 me. She was a part of this portfolio working

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1 group that met all year, and we had members of
2 CAL that helped to provide technical
3 assistance to us.

4 I also feel like teachers have
5 been -- they have received training in these
6 standards already, and we are working with
7 teachers to use these standards in tandem with
8 the academic content standards. They are
9 standards that do have different purposes.

10 I think if we were not to adopt
11 ELP standards that would be a travesty,
12 because the ELP standards are helping us to
13 meet the needs of our English language
14 learners who are trying to attain the academic
15 content.

16 So I wholeheartedly endorse these
17 ELP standards, and I hope the Board will
18 consider them seriously.

19 The second question, I can't give
20 you a cost. I will have to get back to you on
21 that. That's my -- my focus is professional
22 development, but I am sure someone that is a

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1 part of a consortium --

2 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Part of that
3 question was, if you couldn't answer the
4 bigger question, could you answer the
5 professional development piece.

6 MS. SUCHENSKI: Okay.

7 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: What it would
8 cost.

9 MS. SUCHENSKI: What it would
10 cost?

11 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: To provide the
12 professional development needed to make these
13 standards work, to help these standards work.

14 MS. SUCHENSKI: Cost? Do you mean
15 financial?

16 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Right. For
17 professional development only.

18 MS. SUCHENSKI: Part of what I
19 know is that part of being a member of a
20 consortium, we are given professional
21 development for free. There is a certain
22 amount of days that are --

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1 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Yes. But we
2 talked -- I think the gentleman was here at
3 our last meeting on --

4 MS. SUCHENSKI: I wasn't here at
5 the other --

6 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: -- so he did
7 kind of hit on -- hit on the fact that, beyond
8 a certain point, you know, because your funds
9 run out -- so that might be what you have, but
10 what is needed is what I'm reaching for.

11 MS. SUCHENSKI: I would have to
12 get back to you on that.

13 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Okay. Thank
14 you.

15 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
16 very much. I think our last question is from
17 Mr. Biddle.

18 MEMBER BIDDLE: I apologize in
19 advance. I am going to cut each of you off,
20 because I am going to try to get to each of
21 you. So apologies when I cut you off.

22 I want to start with Ms. Wesley.

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1 I would be curious, real quickly, what has
2 been the best or most high-impact professional
3 development or support you received on these
4 standards?

5 MS. WESLEY: Understanding how the
6 standards can go across the content areas,
7 because one major problem that ELL students
8 have is not just speaking the English
9 language, it is social language, it is
10 academic language, and within academic
11 language each subject area has its own jargon
12 and its own lingo, which is difficult for
13 anyone learning a different language to pick
14 up.

15 The technical language is always
16 harder. These standards help to align that
17 language with the various content areas.

18 MEMBER BIDDLE: Great. Thank you.
19 And you were within your time.

20 Ms. Suchenski, on the professional
21 development that you provide to teachers, and
22 just in general, I would be curious, how are

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1 teachers able to provide feedback to you on
2 their experience or whether or not they felt
3 like the professional development met their
4 needs?

5 MS. SUCHENSKI: We always have
6 evaluations in place, and now there are
7 courses that are on PD planners, a new forum
8 by which --

9 MEMBER BIDDLE: Okay.

10 MS. SUCHENSKI: -- and so there
11 are automatic evaluations that are given to
12 us.

13 MEMBER BIDDLE: And sort of to
14 piggyback on Mr. Lockridge's thoughts, is your
15 sense from the feedback you received that
16 teachers feel like they are getting enough
17 professional development?

18 MS. SUCHENSKI: I think they are
19 always saying, "We would like more." And we
20 have been trying to do more. And the
21 frustrating thing is that so, for example,
22 there are some days that are the job-embedded

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1 professional development days that are -- that
2 are just devoted to the framework or the
3 impact evaluation assessment system.

4 And so we are not able to touch
5 those certain days when they have the
6 professional development days. But we are
7 trying to find ways built into the school day,
8 through the collaborative meeting time, after
9 school faculty meetings, and --

10 MEMBER BIDDLE: Thank you.

11 And now, Mr. Tucker, I heard you
12 say something that I thought was interesting
13 and important, because I -- I made this point
14 earlier to the previous panel, which was it is
15 clear to me that when we look at the ELP
16 standards and, you know, what we talk about in
17 special education, that they are not so
18 distinct as we tend to separate them out.

19 So while we are having a
20 conversation today about ELP standards, and
21 then we will have a conversation next week
22 about special education, and, in fact, in a

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1 working session we had last week with the
2 Superintendent's staff about special
3 education, one of the things that came up was
4 our ability to improve the quality of special
5 education we provide to children, will
6 directly impact our ability to provider a
7 higher quality education to all the children
8 in the city, because right now special ed
9 essentially is bleeding resources away from
10 general education across the city.

11 I would be curious -- how do we --
12 what would be your suggestion on how we keep
13 in front of people that special education,
14 English language learners, and regular
15 education are all connected and we need to
16 keep people clear on the fact that they are?

17 MR. TUCKER: Well, they are. And,
18 in fact, I used the D.C. Coaches' All City
19 Bowl Game, because even in that we have
20 bilingual, Spanish speaking students that
21 actually place kick, Model School for the
22 Deaf, general education students. And for one

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1 week we saw how they got along. So in that
2 one program alone, we saw how it can work if
3 you are bringing them under one standard, with
4 the help that they need.

5 But it goes back to the financial
6 part that you and Mr. Lockridge have just
7 brought up. If the special education is
8 bleeding this city, then how can you have the
9 money to do ESL or general ed, when we know
10 that the budget cuts and the city being \$850
11 million in debt, and it is steady growing. So
12 where do we get the money?

13 And the money comes from federal
14 grants, but if that money is not monitored in
15 a correct data, then you don't have the money
16 to give professional development, because even
17 general ed teachers now complain about not
18 having enough professional development to get
19 to where they need, and even the special ed
20 people.

21 So when you look at your question,
22 it's two-fold. How do you bring all three

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1 together? And the only way you can do that is
2 have the kind of program and its standard that
3 deals with every part of what we are dealing
4 with here in this city. And right now we are
5 still divided.

6 MEMBER BIDDLE: Thank you very
7 much.

8 And thank you for letting me run
9 over a minute.

10 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: No problem
11 at all. I think we have one more question
12 from Ms. Slover.

13 MEMBER SLOVER: Thank you. Thank
14 you all for being here.

15 You know, I asked a question of
16 the last panel about the additional tools and
17 resources that are made possible, or more
18 possible, when you have a consortium across
19 states in particular, and you all answered
20 that question before I even got to ask you.

21 You talked particularly about
22 professional development and a little bit

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1 about the CAL center that produces the ACCESS,
2 which leads me really as a segue into my
3 second question, which is thinking about
4 assessment and what it means to really assess
5 for understanding and to assess students in a
6 subject area, but who have, you know,
7 limitations around language.

8 What are the implications for
9 assessment? They take the DC CAS, they take
10 the DC BAS. Are there other things that we
11 should be thinking about as a state regarding
12 assessment to make -- to really make sure that
13 those measures are accurately assessing and
14 measuring student understanding?

15 MS. SUCHENSKI: I'm glad you asked
16 that question.

17 (Laughter.)

18 MEMBER SLOVER: It's my favorite
19 subject.

20 MS. SUCHENSKI: Yes.

21 MEMBER SLOVER: So I had to ask.

22 MS. SUCHENSKI: Mine, too. We are

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1 working -- part of the project that I have
2 been involved with, and other colleagues,
3 other teachers, other colleagues at OBE, has
4 been in developing these formative writing
5 assessments that are grounded in the different
6 ELP standards, which address a different
7 content. Like Karen was saying, it's social
8 -- the language of social studies. We say the
9 language of language arts, the language of
10 science, the language of math.

11 So, in fact, the training that we
12 were doing at CHEC last week was working with
13 teachers to develop some of those writing
14 assessments and using a writing evaluation
15 rubric that assesses -- although the tasks are
16 aligned to their -- aligned to the ELP
17 standards and academic content standards, so a
18 task might be addressing the language of
19 social studies, they are looking at it through
20 the lens of a language proficiency evaluation
21 rubric.

22 And so I think the things that we

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1 have in place are the standardized annual
2 tests that we give once a year. The things
3 that we need I believe are some of the things
4 that -- the WIDA consortium is involved in a
5 project called the WIDA FLARE project, which
6 is, certain states have adopted -- and I would
7 love -- it's not yet available to elementary
8 schools, but it is working with teachers to
9 develop formative assessments.

10 And I am a strong advocate of
11 portfolios. I have worked with our own
12 district and our own office to develop
13 portfolios, and these -- the WIDA FLARE
14 project is a project that empowers teachers to
15 create their own assessments, because those
16 once-a-year assessments, like the DC CAS, and
17 even our ACCESS for ELLs, gives us knowledge
18 of how that student is doing one time during
19 the year. And we need more formative
20 assessments.

21 The DC BAS, in my opinion, is also
22 -- it's an experimental test. It's not a

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1 test that a teacher is using, that they are
2 creating, that is embedded in their own
3 curriculum. It is not authentic assessment,
4 and I feel like we are -- we need more support
5 with that. And I would love to see our
6 district adopt something like the WIDA FLARE
7 project, which is available right now.

8 Does that answer your question?
9 And developing more formative types of
10 assessment that could be standardized.

11 MEMBER SLOVER: That was very
12 helpful, and I'm sorry that I ran out of time.
13 But I would be happy to follow-up more on
14 this. That was very helpful.

15 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: We have a
16 second round, Ms. Slover, so we might allow
17 you to follow-up a little bit. But I'll go to
18 Mr. Lockridge first on the second round.

19 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: On professional
20 development, has the charter school system and
21 -- basically, CAL had the contract with D.C.
22 Public Schools, am I correct?

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1 MS. SUCHENSKI: CAL is a partner
2 of WIDA.

3 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Of WIDA --

4 MS. SUCHENSKI: Right.

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: And they
6 jointly had a contract with the system, with
7 D.C. Public Schools, or did -- or who did they
8 have the contract with?

9 MS. SUCHENSKI: They had a partner
10 -- they were providing us technical assistance
11 --

12 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Yes. They were
13 providing us technical assistance. We weren't
14 paying --

15 MS. SUCHENSKI: I'm not quite sure
16 what their relationship --

17 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: But my question
18 is this: has the school system been helpful
19 in -- with the professional development in
20 terms of allowing access to the program for
21 special -- for the teachers' professional
22 development?

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1 MS. SUCHENSKI: Has the school
2 district been helpful?

3 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: You are working
4 for who?

5 MS. SUCHENSKI: I am working for
6 the school district, as an independent
7 contractor now.

8 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Right.

9 MS. SUCHENSKI: For the Office of
10 Bilingual Education.

11 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: So when you go
12 do a professional -- when the professional
13 development is being done, this is being done
14 through the school system? I'm saying, are
15 they providing you with enough time? You just
16 said earlier that on the regular professional
17 development days those are days that you
18 normally can't access, you have to access
19 additional days. Am I correct? Is that what
20 you were saying?

21 MS. SUCHENSKI: Yes.

22 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: So I am --

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1 MS. SUCHENSKI: Some of the
2 professional development days have been
3 strictly allotted for the impact and the new
4 framework.

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: So how much
6 time is allotted -- the time that they allot
7 for you is not -- you would like to have more
8 time. Have you suggested to them more time is
9 requested?

10 MS. SUCHENSKI: Yes.

11 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: And have they
12 been helpful in trying to provide you with the
13 additional time?

14 MS. SUCHENSKI: Yes. A lot of the
15 professional development that we do through
16 the Office of Bilingual Education is after
17 school, but we have also made in-roads,
18 especially upon principals' requests or other
19 -- a group of teachers at a school, like at
20 CHEC, and so we went during their morning
21 collaboration time, which was like two
22 consecutive mornings.

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1 So they are trying to find -- you
2 know, working within the school system, they
3 are trying to find time for us to do
4 professional development.

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: The reason why
6 I'm asking is this. You know, I have been on
7 the Board for -- this is my eleventh year.
8 And we have -- the Board of Education was a
9 Board of Education. We had book companies
10 that -- we voted on contracts to book
11 companies. And I was opposed to some of those
12 contracts, because some of those book
13 companies had contracts with us for 15 to 20
14 years, and our kids still couldn't read.

15 And in their contract, they had
16 contracts that had -- that they had to provide
17 professional development days in the contract.

18 And sometimes this -- one of their excuses
19 was, "Well, we couldn't find -- the school
20 system wouldn't work with us in providing the
21 time enough that we needed." So that's why
22 I'm asking the question.

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1 MS. SUCHENSKI: Oh, no, no.

2 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Because I don't
3 want to, you know, something -- and we ask a
4 question later, how did we get here? And you
5 didn't -- even though we put standards in
6 place, we didn't move very far. And there are
7 some reasons why we didn't move very far, and
8 here are some of the reasons why.

9 And so a lot of the reasons that
10 people have used in the past is professional
11 development, and so if professional
12 development is lacking that means the program
13 overall is going -- not going to have the same
14 positive impact that it would have, if the
15 professional development is divided -- I mean,
16 provided in a way that was enough professional
17 development for those teachers to feel
18 comfortable with what they are teaching and
19 receiving it.

20 Based on what you -- what the two
21 organizations you are -- what their standards
22 are suggesting that we do, standards are

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1 standard. Kids can learn. If teachers can
2 teach what kids should learn, and they are not
3 prepared, then the kids are not going to be
4 prepared.

5 That is the reason that these book
6 companies used. I am trying to find -- I
7 don't want to hear that again, basically
8 coming from anybody that is providing some
9 academic services to D.C. public kids.

10 So the question was: do you think
11 that -- and I think you answered that earlier
12 -- that all teachers say that they need more
13 professional development? And if that's what
14 teachers are saying, that is where the rubber
15 hits the road, and that is where learning
16 takes place. Then, if the teachers feel it is
17 inadequate, then it is going to be inadequate.

18 And so I'm saying, does the system
19 provide you enough time, or have you worked
20 with them -- are they working with you to
21 provide enough time for professional
22 development at the end of the day?

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1 MS. SUCHENSKI: I think an
2 official adoption of these particular ELP
3 standards would create more opportunities for
4 professional development on them, because what
5 has happened is the academic content standards
6 and the DC CAS has taken priority in most of
7 the schools. And what happens is --

8 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: That's right.
9 But at the end of the day, when we talked
10 about assessments, then the students that --
11 the English as a second language students,
12 they are not U.S. -- everybody that has come
13 here said that they are not being -- that the
14 standards would help them in the assessments.

15 So at the end of the day, if they
16 have professional development that is being
17 provided, then it is going to help them with
18 the bottom line. And that is the test through
19 the teaching.

20 So, you know, they go hand-in-
21 hand. You can't separate them and say you
22 think that because we are going to provide the

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1 standards that that would move the system,
2 both systems, the charter schools as well as
3 D.C. public schools, in a way that they would
4 provide.

5 That is not no guarantee, and it
6 is not even a guarantee that they have enough
7 money to be able to do the things in the
8 standards -- that the academic piece is in the
9 standard.

10 So there is two problems in my
11 mind that even though we pass these standards
12 that are going to still exist. One is the
13 proper time for professional development to
14 help move these standards along. And second
15 is, can you fund them?

16 That's the bottom line. It goes
17 back to what Mr. Tucker said with special
18 education. The bus system runs about \$75
19 million. If you could do the transportation
20 piece alone, you would have the money to help
21 support some other things. And so we are in a
22 situation now where we might not even have

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1 funds enough to cover programs that already
2 exist.

3 So just passing a set of standards
4 and then saying "you think" -- I mean, I
5 didn't ignore you for saying that, but I'm
6 saying say what you need. Then, at the end of
7 the day, even -- you know, I know who our
8 employee is -- but at the end of the day you
9 are supporting the kids. That's who we are
10 supposed to be supporting.

11 So, no, this is -- that time is
12 not -- that time is inadequate. What can the
13 state do to help us push that? Nobody will
14 stand up for kids to that level. You sat here
15 and said it, but you won't take it one step
16 further and say it publicly that this is not
17 enough, we need to add more, and possibly
18 there is going to be an additional cost and
19 possibly what it is.

20 MS. SUCHENSKI: We are going to
21 get back to you about the cost, but I am just
22 personally speaking -- I mean, I have to

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1 separate myself --

2 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: I understand.
3 I understand.

4 MS. SUCHENSKI: -- out from --

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: But if I was
6 sitting where you are sitting, I'd say, "I
7 need X amount of professional development for
8 my program. I'm not currently getting that.
9 We might be working towards it, but we're not
10 there yet." I mean, I don't want to put words
11 in your mouth, but, you know, that's what --

12 MS. SUCHENSKI: I think that
13 that's how people feel. I mean, I have taught
14 in the school system for 10 and a half years.

15 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Who is --

16 MS. SUCHENSKI: I think we have
17 always felt like that as teachers, you know,
18 we could always benefit more from professional
19 development. And now --

20 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Maybe you could
21 get some grant money from the state, you know.
22 The Superintendent is right here. I can't

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1 approve it, but I would if I had the power to,
2 I would make sure that some of these grants
3 came through and devoted -- or even the Race
4 to the Top money, you know, the meeting -- you
5 have to come to those meetings and push for
6 that, even though as a citizen -- do you live
7 in the District?

8 MS. SUCHENSKI: Yes, I do.

9 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Okay. Then do
10 it as a citizen, and then it benefits you on
11 both sides. But I'm just saying, we know that
12 that's not enough. And if I pass a standard,
13 I'm just not sitting here passing the standard
14 because it is the right thing to do. I want
15 to see it implemented, and I want it to work.

16 So anything that makes it work is
17 what I want to know, how we can make it work,
18 not that it's just good. I want to -- I'm not
19 jumping on you. I'm just being -- you know,
20 I'm --

21 MS. SUCHENSKI: No, I -- I am just
22 trying to let you know also that I think with

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1 an official adoption -- would also increase
2 sort of the validity of these standards and
3 would increase the opportunities for
4 professional development, and also to work in
5 tandem with the other sets of standards that
6 have been adopted and create more professional
7 development opportunities for working across
8 -- working with special ed folks, ELL folks,
9 general ed, all together, working towards the
10 same goal.

11 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: I hope your --

12 MS. SUCHENSKI: Personally --

13 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: -- crystal ball
14 is better than the one I am looking in,
15 because my crystal ball don't say that. But I
16 am going to be faithful like you are and look
17 in your crystal ball. But, you know, my
18 crystal ball says something different, but I
19 hear what you're saying and I appreciate it.

20 Thank you for coming, and you were
21 very helpful.

22 MS. SUCHENSKI: Thank you.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: I would
2 like to thank the members of the panel very,
3 very much, for your time tonight, for your
4 testimony, and for the information. We do
5 look forward to you getting back to us if you
6 have some more thoughts and ideas.

7 We are not scheduled to take a
8 vote on this until February 17th, so you do
9 have a little bit of time to respond to some
10 of Mr. Lockridge's questions, because I think
11 they are very valid. And I think a number of
12 the members here did ask about the
13 professional development piece, which is
14 critical to the implementation of all of this.

15 Thank you very, very much.

16 At this point, we have no further
17 witnesses, so I will move on to closing
18 comments from members of the State Board. I
19 think -- oh, the panel, yes, is excused.
20 Thank you very much, Dr. Briggs. Wouldn't
21 want to keep you here unnecessarily any
22 longer.

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1 I think the last time we did this
2 we went in order from Ward 1 through 8. Let's
3 do it even and odd this time. We'll go Wards
4 2, 4, 6, and then 1, 3, and 5. Okay? That
5 puts you on, Ms. Lord, for two minutes.

6 MEMBER LORD: Thank you very much.

7 Thanks to all of the witnesses, particularly
8 the teachers who came down to testify. I know
9 it's late, and there are a lot of things you
10 could be doing, grading papers, developing new
11 lessons. And thanks to all of the people who
12 are listening at home.

13 Standards and discussion of
14 standards can probably seem like a lot of
15 inside baseball. We throw around acronyms, we
16 throw around terms like "professional
17 development," which is teacher training
18 essentially. But for me as a policymaker, it
19 gives us a wonderful opportunity and a window
20 on what is going on in classrooms, and to
21 examine some of the issues that our teachers
22 and our students and our communities are

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1 grappling with.

2 For example, I dare say that
3 anybody playing baseball on Stoddert
4 Elementary's field or dropping by on their --
5 using their wonderful playground could imagine
6 that a third of the students in that
7 elementary school are English language
8 learners. English is not their first
9 language, and they are not very proficient in
10 it. That puts an enormous challenge on your
11 traditional elementary school teacher.

12 And, similarly, the wealth of
13 students who speak another language to me
14 speaks of the wealth, the opportunities that
15 exist around discussions of English language
16 learning, to bring those families into our
17 classrooms to have our students aspire as
18 English language speakers, to learn a foreign
19 language, to learn more about a culture.

20 I think tonight the most -- the
21 happiest word I heard was "collaboration,"
22 where the content teachers and language

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1 teachers for the English language learners are
2 working together. They are looking at, what
3 is the language of science? What is the
4 language of math?

5 You can't really master math
6 without mastering the terminology. If any of
7 you have helped a third grader with homework,
8 you know it's not really a math problem. It's
9 understanding what the language, the English
10 says, before you can get to the math.

11 And I would like to, as we work
12 our way through these standards and
13 discussions of standards, is to figure out,
14 how do we devulcanize our education systems?
15 Because right now we are talking about English
16 language learning standards over here, but it
17 is very clear that they apply to special ed
18 students and to regular students as well.

19 And how do we create a forum so
20 that teachers and learners and the specialized
21 content people can all come together and say,
22 "You know what? This is really a good method

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1 of instruction. We are not going to call it
2 English language learning instruction. We
3 are not going to call it math instruction. We
4 are going to call it good instruction."

5 So thank you very much for being
6 here with us. I look forward to next week's
7 discussion on special education. And with
8 that, I will sign off.

9 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
10 very much.

11 Now we will have the
12 representative from Ward 4, Sekou Biddle.

13 MEMBER BIDDLE: Thank you. I'm
14 going to hit on three different things
15 quickly. One is I want to recognize,
16 obviously, a lot of people have probably read
17 and heard about in the news today the tragic
18 events that have taken place in Haiti. And I
19 would like to encourage people to get involved
20 and find some way to support the communities
21 that are struggling with the natural disaster
22 in Haiti.

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1 But I would like to offer a word
2 of caution. Unfortunately, whenever events
3 like this take place, two things happen.
4 Inevitably, people find ways to support those
5 who are in trouble, and, inevitably, some
6 people somewhere get it in their heads that
7 this is a great opportunity to essentially
8 further victimize people who are trying to
9 support those in need.

10 So if you choose to get involved
11 and support what is going on in Haiti, please
12 take the extra minute or two to make sure the
13 organization that you are reaching out to or
14 working with is a reputable organization. And
15 I don't think it's appropriate for me to
16 endorse or recognize any of those right now,
17 so I just want to ask you to spend the extra
18 time to do that.

19 I want to recognize a moment of
20 progress, which is -- it occurs to me that
21 this week in D.C. Public Schools they are
22 taking the DC BAS. And for all of the

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1 challenges we have had in the District for
2 years, I think that the administration of DC
3 BAS, to me, represents a significant step
4 forward in that years ago we didn't have
5 assessments that were a link to our standards.

6 Now we have an assessment system
7 that is not only linked to our standards, but
8 also a series of benchmark assessments that
9 are used throughout the year, perhaps baby
10 steps, but certainly steps in the right
11 direction of making sure we have an
12 educational system that is designed to support
13 our teachers and supporting our children's
14 success.

15 And then, I want to follow-up on
16 the dialogue between Mr. Lockridge and Ms.
17 Suchenski, because I think that there is some
18 -- there is an important nugget there, and
19 that is that we oftentimes are asking the
20 wrong questions about how we make sure the
21 schools work and the students learn.

22 We oftentimes start from the basic

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1 understanding that we have a certain level of
2 resources, and we are going to try to figure
3 out, what can we do with these? I think the
4 question is actually, what will it take for
5 all children to succeed in school? And from
6 there, we need to determine, why don't we have
7 those resources available and how do we get
8 them.

9 I think it's important for us to
10 put a stake in the ground on that issue that
11 we need to be willing to either decide that we
12 are or are not going to provide the resources
13 that children need to be successful, because
14 if we are not, quite frankly, we are wasting a
15 lot of people's time. And then, if we are, we
16 are going to have to make some hard decisions
17 around, how do we marshal those resources to
18 make them available for our children and for
19 our teachers that serve our children.

20 So with that, I will say good
21 evening and thanks to everybody for coming. I
22 look forward to next week's meeting.

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1 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
2 very much, Mr. Biddle.

3 We'll move on to our
4 representative from Ward 8, Mr. Lockridge.

5 MEMBER LOCKRIDGE: Thank you. Mr.
6 Biddle covered just about what I was thinking
7 about saying earlier --

8 (Laughter.)

9 -- in terms of the Haitian
10 situation, and also, you know, we have to
11 really put our finger on, what does it cost to
12 educate a child in the District of Columbia?

13 And once we get our arms around
14 the cost, I mean, not what we think it costs
15 or what we -- what the budget will bear, but
16 really what it costs, and to put -- if we want
17 to see a change, a reform in education, a lot
18 of people say it's not about the dollar, but
19 in some districts it is about the dollar. And
20 in this district it is.

21 And we waste a lot of money in the
22 District of Columbia, to the tune of -- we

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1 talked about special education. Mr. Tucker
2 was talking about when you spend \$75 million
3 on bus -- on transportation, I could transport
4 the whole school system within the District of
5 Columbia for that kind of money. And so it's
6 about really restructuring education.

7 And the competition in education,
8 to me, it shouldn't be a competition. And the
9 difference between a charter school and D.C.
10 public schools, I thought all schools was
11 created equal, and that we shouldn't be here
12 competing about who -- what is the best
13 school. All of them should be good.

14 And if we really look at a plan on
15 what it would cost to educate a student in the
16 District of Columbia, and include both
17 segments, and where there is duplicity in
18 terms of education we really need to take a
19 hard look at that, because there is no need in
20 funding a charter school that is a duplicate
21 to a D.C. public school. The funds would be
22 better spent another way.

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1 But we are politicians, and those
2 of us who reach for power, sometimes we skip
3 over what the real reality of what -- the
4 purpose that we're here for, and that's the
5 kids. And we have done a lot of skipping
6 around here, and it's time for us to really,
7 really focus on what it takes to educate a kid
8 and look at all of the different aspects of
9 educational reform and make them work
10 together.

11 If we can build an Atom bomb,
12 brand-new car that talks to you and tell you
13 which way to go park themselves, I know we can
14 solve a problem that -- to educate our kids in
15 a sensible way, because the way we are headed
16 now is not the sensible way, and it is not the
17 best way. And we are America. We are -- and
18 I brought up one other thing.

19 The reason I talked about Spanish
20 being taught in China, English is -- you've
21 got to -- every school district, every
22 province in China, has to teach English. Has

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1 to. And that's the way it should be with
2 Spanish, since the country is changing in
3 terms of its demographics, and we have to be
4 able to change with them.

5 And then, a third language, once
6 you reach a certain grade level, we -- and I
7 think we passed a three-year standard, and we
8 can still have that third and just -- our
9 students would be speaking three languages
10 instead of one. And we'll be competitive
11 nationally, and we'll be back -- getting back
12 to building a United States that was the
13 greatest and it can continue to be, but we
14 can't be arguing about what is the best way
15 for us to educate our kids.

16 Thank you.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
18 Mr. Lockridge.

19 We'll move on now to Ward 1.
20 Dotti Love Wade.

21 MEMBER WADE: Good evening. I
22 feel compelled this evening to go off point

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1 and to address three different points. The
2 first one, of course, is to express my
3 sentiment, my prayers for the people of Haiti,
4 the families that are here in the United
5 States of those citizens of Haiti. Also, the
6 citizens of the United States that are
7 currently in Haiti, and those people from
8 around the world who are visiting.

9 I would ask that each of you dig
10 deep in your pockets, as best you can, to make
11 whatever contribution you can to the effort to
12 assist the devastated people of Haiti.

13 Secondly, I would like to, in the
14 same vein, remind everyone that on Monday we
15 will be celebrating the birthday of Dr. Martin
16 Luther King. And in that vein, we would like
17 to encourage you to all go out and volunteer
18 in some way to help your fellow citizens.
19 There is a great need in this city, and there
20 is a great need in this country.

21 And while we are talking about
22 educating our students, one of the best

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1 lessons we can teach them is empathy and
2 compassion. And we need to teach them how to
3 reach out to people who are less fortunate
4 than they are, or who may be more fortunate
5 but need your specific assistance at a given
6 time.

7 And, thirdly, I would like to
8 encourage everyone to please participate in
9 the 2010 Census. We are talking about money
10 to educate our children. Without a proper
11 Census count, the District will not have the
12 necessary funds to accommodate all of the
13 children who need the funding.

14 So I am encouraging everyone
15 within the hearing of my voice to take this
16 opportunity to look inward, to see what you
17 can do to reach outward, to help those people
18 in Haiti who so desperately need our
19 assistance, to volunteer to help those people
20 in our communities who desperately need it.
21 It has been very cold. There is a need for
22 housing and clothing and food and shelter.

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1 And also, to help the citizens of
2 our city and the country in the future by
3 doing your part to give an accurate count via
4 Census, so that the appropriate funding will
5 be available for us.

6 So Happy Martin Luther King's
7 Birthday, you all.

8 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
9 Ms. Wade.

10 Mr. Jones from Ward 5.

11 MEMBER JONES: Good evening,
12 everyone. It is quite interesting that Mr.
13 Lockridge was focusing on resources. And that
14 is one of my big concerns of late. It is a
15 funny thing in my lifetime, at least the last
16 20 years of my work life, budget time has
17 always been an angst with me, and it has
18 always made my stomach knot up. And why?
19 Because it affects our lives, and it affects
20 us in a real way.

21 Most recently I had the
22 unfortunate pleasure of viewing some of the

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1 documents that DCPS is formulating for the
2 budgets for our children. There are a number
3 of line items of their suggestions -- and I
4 know they're not finished, but hopefully
5 they're listening -- that brought great
6 concern to me.

7 And one in particular was on the
8 technology side, where there are several
9 examples of what their recommendations were.
10 One of the recommendations was less than \$10
11 basically -- well, they had a number on there.

12 But then, I'm looking at the different line
13 items, but I noticed that number was a little
14 small.

15 So after I looked at the number of
16 students we have in school, and I said, "Well,
17 doggone it, that's less than \$10," after I
18 broke it down, per student. Now, if we've got
19 a school of 300 students, and let's assume it
20 is \$10, you're talking about \$3,000 per
21 school. That's ridiculous.

22 Mr. Lockridge, I have got to tell

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1 you, all schools are not created equal. I'm
2 glad Mr. Tucker is still here, because over
3 the past couple of years -- and Mr. Tucker and
4 I don't always agree, but he has taken me on
5 many tours of schools.

6 And I have gone to some schools
7 where they have flat-screens in every
8 classroom. He can testify to that. I have
9 gone to some schools where they have
10 Promethean boards and SMART boards. And then,
11 I have gone to schools where, doggone it,
12 those schools don't even have cable or high-
13 speed internet.

14 And they have the thought in their
15 mind of \$10 per student? And, moreover, how
16 are they going to distribute that \$10? We've
17 got to be concerned about the distribution of
18 those resources once they're budgeted.

19 And I suspect there are going to
20 be a lot of children that are going to be left
21 out. We are always talking about bridging the
22 digital divide between our white students and

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1 non-white students. Well, we are never going
2 to do it, if we continue down that road.

3 So I hope they're listening, and I
4 hope they give some serious thought to that.

5 And in addition to that, there are
6 corporations that have agreements in this
7 city, such as Comcast. And I'm not attacking
8 Comcast or RCN, and soon to be Verizon, who
9 have franchise agreements. And in their
10 franchise agreements, it says that they are
11 going to provide technology to our schools.
12 All schools are going to be wired for cable.
13 All schools are going to be wired for
14 broadband.

15 Guess what? That's not accurate,
16 because it's not happening in all schools. So
17 all schools are not created equal.

18 Now, I've had some schools where I
19 have called Comcast, and I want to say this
20 about Comcast, when I have called them and
21 said, "Look, this school is not wired. You
22 have not done what you said," guess what? No

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1 problem. Johnny on the spot. So it's not
2 with them. It's with us, it's with this
3 government and the people who are running it,
4 not doing their jobs.

5 If they have a franchise agreement
6 to wire every school, well, doggone it, it is
7 our responsibility to make sure every school
8 is wired.

9 Now, I have personally wired some
10 schools. My small little business, I have
11 personally bought laptops and computers for
12 people. I am just one little small company.
13 Everybody has got to do their part.

14 But when it comes to our resources
15 and budgeting, our budget people must not only
16 just do the numbers -- and those of us who are
17 small business people, we understand what
18 budgets are. We understand what budgets are
19 in the true sense.

20 I have done budgeting for large
21 corporations, I have worked for departments
22 and government agencies as well in this city,

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1 but you know what? Doing budgets for a small
2 business is really important, because, guess
3 what? If I don't have -- generate the
4 resources, and if I -- my budgeting isn't
5 right, guess what? I've got to look in
6 someone's face and tell them they have to go
7 home. That's a sad thing.

8 We experienced that last year in
9 our D.C. public schools. I hope we don't
10 experience that again. I hope they give
11 serious thought to every line item when they
12 are doing their budgets. I hope they don't
13 give us a fake budget. We know the economy is
14 in a bad way. Our local dollars are generated
15 through only a few sources. Ted, you know
16 this well -- through real estate taxes, income
17 taxes, and sales taxes.

18 And, of course, we have government
19 federal grants, and then we've got other
20 agencies, like the Lottery, that generate
21 funding. But through those three major
22 sources, we know the economy is in bad shape,

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1 so we know there is -- we are going to suffer
2 a little. We've got to give up something.

3 I think everyone will understand
4 that and work with us, if we are transparent
5 and we have open dialogue, open conversation,
6 and say, "This is why we have to do this. You
7 may not get all your money this year, but
8 you'll get it next year." And have a plan.

9 But that's my soapbox tonight,
10 and, I'll tell you, I'm angry, I'm disturbed
11 about that number, so I hope the budget people
12 are listening and try to find another way.
13 Ten dollars does not cut it. We will never
14 bridge the digital divide if we've got to
15 continue down that road.

16 So, and to my Haitian brothers and
17 sisters, God bless you. And, Mr. Biddle and
18 Ms. Wade, thank you for that outreach.

19 And I know I have gone over my
20 time, but I figured Mr. Lockridge took some
21 time earlier, so I've taken some of mine back.

22 (Laughter.)

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1 Good night.

2 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
3 very much, Mr. Jones. And, you know, you were
4 kind of quiet during the questioning, so I
5 didn't mind you going over. And you made some
6 very, very relevant points. So thank you very
7 much.

8 Ms. Douglas, from Ward 7.

9 MEMBER DOUGLAS: Yes, sir. I just
10 want to say -- thank the audience for being
11 here tonight, and our heart and soul and our
12 prayers are going out to Haiti to our
13 families.

14 I just want to say the special
15 development for our kids is really important.

16 It is just like when a baby is born, the
17 mother is so important to be close, to have
18 the child close to them in order for him and
19 her to learn. And the learning process is
20 really important for our children, and the
21 reason that we're here is because we want to
22 get a quality education.

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1 So we should make sure that all of
2 these tools and all of these resources are
3 available for all kids from all walks of life
4 and all creed and race and color doesn't
5 matter. Make sure that we make sure that all
6 our kids are getting an equal education and
7 all the things that they need in order to
8 begin our 21st century.

9 As we sit here and shuffle cards
10 and pretend, as our colleague said here, and
11 withhold information, our kids will never be
12 on the level that they should be. So I am
13 hoping that, from our City Council, from our
14 parents that speaks out, that we need to have
15 -- they are trying so hard to have input on
16 what is happening with our kids in learning,
17 in the learning process, that we should be
18 able to provide all of those services more
19 than -- not 100 percent, but 125 percent.

20 So I am hoping that, when you look
21 at -- decide on this decision, and I know we
22 said that are going to look at this next week

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1 -- that we make the right decision. We may
2 have to come back, like Mr. Lockridge said, to
3 say, "Well, did we make the right decision?"
4 and find out that the books are not being used
5 properly, and the kids are still not learning.

6 So we want to give them the best
7 resources and materials there to -- and also
8 the best technology that there is in our
9 nation's capital, so we can make sure that
10 they can achieve those goals and preparing
11 them for college. So this is our main reason
12 why we are here, to serve our students and our
13 children.

14 So I just want to thank -- we all
15 need to come together. No matter what
16 different disagreements that we have among
17 each other, we are here to serve our kids and
18 to make sure, because we -- you all was in
19 school once, too, and we had to go through the
20 same process.

21 So share that resource and be
22 mentors and come back and make sure that our

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1 kids get that same quality education that you
2 all had and that we have to get here where we
3 are today.

4 Thank you very much.

5 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you,
6 Ms. Douglas.

7 And let me wrap up by saying I
8 want to thank all of the members in our
9 audience tonight, those members in the viewing
10 public, and my colleagues, and the presenters
11 particularly, for a very, very thoughtful
12 discussion tonight. We sincerely appreciate
13 the expertise that you continuously bring down
14 here, and your thoughts.

15 Whether you agree with us,
16 disagree with us, or disagree with the
17 presentations and the standards that have been
18 put before you, we do sincerely appreciate
19 your input, because at the end of the day all
20 of that goes into making a better product, and
21 hopefully making a better outcome for our
22 students.

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1 Dr. Briggs, our State
2 Superintendent, has extended herself to allow
3 us to visit a variety of schools with her over
4 the next month or so. And in conversations
5 like this, when we get down to the nitty-
6 gritty of, what is going on in the classroom,
7 how are we actually educating our students,
8 makes those school visits so much more
9 important.

10 And I hope that all of my
11 colleagues will take advantage of the
12 opportunity that is before us to go with the
13 State Superintendent, go into some of the
14 classrooms. I know many of you do it on your
15 own anyway on a very regular basis, but I
16 would highly recommend that we take and go
17 around with our State Superintendent.

18 Our final vote on these standards
19 is scheduled, again, for February 17th. And
20 for those of you who would like to provide us
21 with additional information and thoughts prior
22 to that, please feel free to do so.

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1 And, finally, I will go off point
2 for just a second. But it is an educational
3 opportunity that I would like to talk about.
4 As a person who worked on Capitol Hill for a
5 little bit when I was a very, very young
6 person, the Congressional Page Program is
7 opening up now for 16 year-olds and they are
8 recruiting a new class of pages for 16 year-
9 olds.

10 I tried to put a link up on our
11 website. There seems to be some question
12 about whether or not we can link that
13 information from another program that is not a
14 District program. But there is a link that,
15 if you are interested in helping your daughter
16 or your son or you yourself, maybe a 16 year-
17 old is out there, you can go to
18 www.housepageprogram.house.gov, and it will
19 give you the information and you can apply
20 from that link.

21 Can I get a motion to adjourn?
22 Pardon me? Oh, would Mr. Jackson like to make

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1 some comments? Our student member?

2 REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON: I would
3 just like to thank everybody for coming out
4 tonight and to express my sympathy for the
5 people in Haiti for their tragedies. So --

6 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you
7 very much. With that, I will now entertain a
8 motion to adjourn.

9 MEMBER WADE: So move that we
10 adjourn.

11 MEMBER BIDDLE: Second.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT TRABUE: Thank you.
13 We are adjourned.

14 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
15 matter went off the record at 8:31 p.m.)
16
17
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